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The Administration of the Sacraments

Our Lord Jesus Christ in the night in which He was betrayed instituted, and Himself administered, His Holy Supper. To this day this Sacrament remains *His* Holy Supper, a heavenly banquet which He Himself has spread and which He Himself serves to all attendants. Says Luther: "We know that it is and is called the Lord's Supper, not the supper of the Christians. For the Lord has not only instituted it, but also prepares and administers it Himself. He Himself is the cook and the waiter, food and drink." (XX, 884.) Invited by His boundless grace, we stand as guests before His face. As Host He spreads no common food; here is His body and His blood. Here He Himself, both Gift and Giver, with His own flesh and blood our souls doth nourish. He Himself, though now sitting at the right hand of God, still is the real Administrator of the Sacrament, though now He no longer visibly stands before us but dispenses the Sacrament by representation. The other Sacrament, Baptism, He already during His life on earth seems to have administered only in this manner. Compare John 3:22; 4:1 and the explanatory note: "though Jesus Himself baptized not but His disciples," John 4:2. That is now the Lord's manner of administering His Sacraments in His holy Church: by representatives, whom He has chosen, through whom He Himself baptizes and distributes the Lord's Supper just as truly as He preaches through His representatives, Luke 10:16. Who are these representatives? Christ Himself leaves no doubt as to the answer.

When Christ instituted His Holy Supper, there were assembled with Him "the twelve disciples," Matt. 26:20; "the apostles," Luke 22:14. The twelve apostles, however, did not receive the Eucharist because of their apostolic office, as an exclusive right and blessing to be granted only to apostles, or at least only to the members of the clergy. They were there assembled as disciples of Jesus, and to them as His disciples the Lord administered the

Sacrament, Matt. 26:26. Nor were the apostles in their official capacity at that time ordained or designated as the future exclusive dispensers or administrators of the Sacrament. The words "This do," addressed to those present, were spoken to them in their capacity as apostles as little as the words "Take, eat; take, drink," were addressed to them only as apostles. Christ instituted His Supper for His disciples. His disciples until the end of time are to do what He did on that memorable evening, are to dispense His body and His blood under the blessed bread and wine, till He come. Likewise, when the Lord instituted Holy Baptism shortly before His ascension, He did not address only the eleven disciples mentioned by Matthew, chap. 28:16 (cp. Mark 16:14-20) nor the five hundred brethren, 1 Cor. 15:6, if Paul is here speaking of the same appearance as Matthew. His words on that memorable occasion were directed to all with whom He shall be unto the end of the world, Matt. 28:20. He had in mind His congregation of saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus, comprising all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus, 1 Cor. 1:2, to whom He announces by His Apostle Paul, "All things are yours," 1 Cor. 3:21, 22. He was thinking of that communion of elect strangers to whom Peter in the spirit of Christ wrote those significant words "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," etc., 1 Pet. 2:9. The administration of the Sacraments is but one of the choice gifts bestowed by the heavenly Bridegroom upon His bride, the Church, John 3:28, 29. Jerusalem above, the Holy Christian Church of the New Testament, is "the mother of us all," Gal. 4:26, and "therefore everything by which God's children are born belongs to the Church," as Walther splendidly puts it. (*Walther and the Church*, p. 60.) Says Luther: "The Church is truly Christ's body and member. If she is His body, she has the true Spirit, the Gospel, faith, Baptism, Sacrament, keys, the ministry, prayer, Holy Scripture, and all that Christendom must have." (XVII, 2187.) Nor is this marvelous privilege given to the Church only as a unit, as a totalitarian entity. Speaking at the institution of the Lord's Supper, and again at the institution of Holy Baptism, Christ commissions all the members of the Church of the New Testament, every individual member. He uses the plural, "Take, eat. Drink ye all of it. This do" (Λάβετε, φάγετε, πίετε πάντες). "Go *ye* and teach, baptizing; I have commanded *you*. I am with *you*." There can be no doubt that the Sacraments and their administration are given to all Christians, young and old, man or woman, preacher or layman. Through His holy Church on earth, through His believing followers, Christ now administers His holy Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Christ, however, has not only transmitted to His Church the

right to administer His sacred ordinances, He also has clearly defined the manner in which the Church is to put this precious privilege into operation. Since He is the Author not of confusion but of peace, who wants all things to be done decently and in order, 1 Cor. 14:33, 40, and since there would be disorder, strife, and schisms if every one were to exercise indiscriminately the common right of administering the Sacraments, He has in His wisdom commanded the Church to choose and call special ministers, who in the name and by the authority of the congregation are to administer the sacred ordinances of the house of God. These ministers are in a special sense of the term administrators of the Sacraments, or as Paul expresses it, ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. 4:1. As the great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ, made Peter His assistant shepherd when He told Him on the shore of Lake Tiberias, "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs," John 21:15-17, so Christ gave to His Church some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Eph. 4:11, 12. Cp. Acts 20:28.

It is, therefore, the will of Christ that the congregations to whom He has given His Word and Sacraments, His means of grace, choose and call special men who in the name of the congregation, as its representatives and spokesmen, as stewards of the mysteries of God, are to administer and dispense Word and Sacraments, which the heavenly Bridegroom has entrusted to His Church as His bridal gift. These men have been made rulers over His household by the Lord Himself in order that they as faithful and wise stewards of the mysteries of God give to all the members of the household their portion of meat in due season, Luke 12:42.

The relation of the pastor to the congregation, of the congregation to its pastor, and of both to God with regard to the administration of the Sacraments may be illustrated by the relation of Moses to Aaron and of both to God, Ex. 4:14-17. To Moses was given the office of delivering Israel, He was to do no more, no less, than God told him to do. Aaron was made the spokesman of Moses. Moses was to speak to Aaron, to put words into his mouth, was to be to him instead of God. Aaron was to speak only what Moses had commanded him to speak, while Moses was to put only those words into Aaron's mouth which God had told him. Aaron was responsible to Moses for the words he spoke, and both Moses and Aaron were responsible to God, who had placed them into their respective office. Similarly, to the congregation is given the Office of the Keys, delivering from the bondage of sin. The pastor is the spokesman, the representative of the congregation by divine

appointment. The congregation tells the pastor what he is to do and say, puts the words in his mouth, is to him instead of God. The pastor is to teach and do no more, no less, than the congregation tells him to teach and do, while the congregation is to tell him no more, no less, than God has given her the right to tell him. The pastor is responsible to the congregation whose representative he is, and both congregation and pastor are responsible to God, who has placed into their hands their respective rights and duties. The congregation has not the right to demand obedience on the part of the pastor if it changes the ordinances and words which God has given to it. And the pastor has not the right to obey the congregation if it makes such demands, since, while responsible to the congregation, he is primarily responsible to the Lord, who has called him into His service as His steward and representative. Only if both congregation and pastor speak and do what the Lord has told them to do and to speak, are they really Christ's representatives, the administrators of the manifold blessings of their Lord.

While Scripture very clearly teaches that the Sacraments ordinarily are to be administered by the called ministers of the Word, this does not mean that a Christian layman under no circumstance may administer the Sacraments. When God Himself has so shaped events that the steward is not available, *e. g.,* when there is no pastor in that particular territory, or when a child is at the point of death or an unbaptized adult who has professed his faith and has asked to be baptized is suddenly attacked by a mortal sickness, when, in other words, a case of emergency arises, then any one to whom the Sacraments belong by divine gift, any Christian, may administer what has been entrusted to him by God Himself to such as are in need of these means of grace. This applies to both Sacraments, to Baptism and to Holy Supper, though, as we shall see, not in the same measure. Baptism is the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5; John 3:5, 6), one of the means of discipling the nations (Matt. 28:19; Gal. 3:27), the only means known to us that can engender saving faith in little children, a means, moreover, not to be despised by any adult (Luke 7:30; Acts 2:38-41). Baptism, therefore, the Sacrament ordained by Christ for the initiation into His kingdom, may and must in a case of emergency be administered by any Christian. That is not despising the divine institution of the ministry, which could not function in this case. The case may arise that even an unbeliever, who has not been given the Office of the Keys, may be pressed into service as the dispenser of Baptism, for example, if a Christian mother's new-born babe is in danger of death and she is too weak to perform the baptism and the only person available should

be an unbeliever, a Jewish doctor, a Unitarian nurse. The unbelieving person serves in this case only as the agent for the believing mother, as a dispenser of that Baptism which by divine gift belongs to her. Such a baptism would be a valid and legitimate baptism, provided, of course, that it is performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Calvin teaches that no layman has this right. "Christ has not commanded women nor all men to baptize, but He gave this commandment to those whom He constituted His apostles." (Inst. IV:15, 20.) The Presbyterian confessions agree with Calvin. The Westminster Confession declares: "There be only two Sacraments ordained of Christ, . . . neither of which may be dispensed by any but a minister of the Word lawfully ordained" (XXVII, 4).

In this practise the Calvinists follow the hierarchical error of Rome. In fact, in denying the right of baptism to the laity, they out-Rome Rome, for Rome concedes at least this right to the layman. According to the *Catechismus Romanus* a threefold order of degree is to be observed in the administration of Baptism. Bishops and priests baptize by divine right *(de iure)*, because they have been given the commandment, Go, baptize, in the person of the apostles. The second order is that of the deacons, who may administer Baptism only by permission of the bishop or priest. The last order includes all men, no matter which religion they profess, even Jews. All belonging to this class may baptize without solemn ceremonies, as long as they intend to do what the Church does in baptism. This is in agreement with Canon IV on Baptism, Session VII, Trent. "If any one saith that the baptism which is even given by heretics in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost with the intention of doing what the Church doth is not true baptism; let him be anathema." (Waterworth, p. 56.) Of course, even in this distinction the Roman error is in evidence. Rome condescends to grant the layman a privilege which according to its doctrine belongs by divine right only to the bishop and priest; Christ, on the contrary, gave this Sacrament and its administration to His believing disciples, to all of them, to them alone.

May, then, a layman administer also the Lord's Supper? The Church of Rome denies *in toto* this right to any unordained person. According to the doctrine of Rome the Eucharist is a Sacrament, and none but an ordained priest may celebrate Mass or administer the Holy Supper. The Council of Trent anathematizes all who deny that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is offered to God for the sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities of the dying and the dead and that Christ ordained that the apostles and other priests should offer His own body and blood. On the Sacrament

of the Mass. Canon I, II, III. (Waterworth, pp. 158, 159.) In strict keeping with these Canons the *Catechismus Romanus* instructs its readers: "It must be taught that only to the priest the power is given to perform the Eucharist and to distribute it to the believers. . . . The Church has by a law forbidden that any one who is not consecrated should be permitted to handle or touch the holy vessel, the clothes, or other instruments necessary for its administration, unless a grave need should arise." (*Catechismus Romanus,* Part II, Question 65. Smets, p. 253.)

The Council of Trent, Session VII, Of Sacraments in General, Canon X, vociferates: "If any one saith that all Christians have power to administer the Word and all the Sacraments, let him be anathema." This anathema is directed against Luther and his doctrine of the general priesthood of all believers. Answering this charge, Chemnitz calls attention to the fact that it is a gross and glaring misrepresentation of Luther's doctrine and then continues: "If any are of the opinion that the power to take over and exercise the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Church has been granted to any Christian indiscriminately without a special and legitimate call, they are justly and deservedly condemned. For they oppose the well-known divine rule 'How shall they preach except they be sent' (Rom. 10:15) and 'I have not sent these prophets; yet they ran' and Paul's rule 'Let all things be done decently and in order' (1 Cor. 14:40). The Church, however, has always excepted the case of necessity, as Jerome and Augustine testify." (*Examen,* Pars II, Sectio IX.)

Chemnitz clearly and truthfully presents Luther's doctrine. On the one hand, Luther insists on the Scriptural doctrine that all Christians are priests before God and that, therefore, to them primarily belongs the administration of the Lord's Supper. In 1523 he wrote: "The third office is to consecrate and administer the sacred bread and wine. . . . Here they glory and boast that no one else has this power, neither the angels nor the Virgin Mother of God. But we pass over their foolishness and say that this office also is common to all Christians, even as the priesthood. . . . A woman baptizes and proclaims the Word of life, whereby sin is canceled, eternal death removed, the prince of this world expelled, heaven made our own. If the greater is given to all, that is Word and Baptism, then the lesser cannot justly be refused to them, the consecration of the Sacrament." (X, 1577.) "The keys belong to the entire Christian congregation of all Christians and to every one that is a member of that congregation. And this comprises not only the power but also the use and every mode that there can be; else the words of Christ, Matt. 18:15-20, would be violated. In this passage the right in its highest perfection and the use in

its fullest completeness is granted and sealed that they [the Christians] might bind and loose; else we should deny to Christ Himself the right and use of the keys when He dwells in the midst of two." (X:1581.) And in 1533 Luther writes: "Our faith and Sacrament must not be based on the person, be he pious or consecrated, ordained or unordained, called or intruder, the devil or his mother, but on Christ, on His Word, on His office, on His commandments and ordinances. Where these are established, all is clearly established and administered, no matter who or what the person may be." (XIV:1272.)

But as clearly as Luther taught that the Office of the Keys, Word and Sacraments, were a bridal gift given to the entire Church by the heavenly Bridegroom, just so clearly he taught that the actual administration of the Sacraments was entrusted to the called ministers of Christ. In response to a question whether a housefather might serve Holy Communion to his family Luther writes: "He has not the duty to establish the custom of communing himself and his family. It is also unnecessary, since he has neither the call nor the command to do this. If ministers, whose duty it is to administer the Sacrament, refuse to give it to him and his, he may well be saved through his faith by the Word. To administer the Sacrament in the individual homes will cause great offense and in the end serve no good purpose but create schisms and sects. . . . It is right and a duty that a housefather teaches the Word of God to his family, for God has commanded that we should teach our children and household, and the Word is committed to every one. But the Sacrament is a public confession and must have public administers." (X:2224 f. Cp. also X:2226, 2228 f.; XX:1759.)

Hartmann writes: "May a layman consecrate and administer the Holy Supper? We answer negatively. Though a layman may in case of necessity administer Baptism, the same right is not to be conceded to him with respect to the administration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The reason for the difference is this. There is not the same necessity of the Lord's Supper as of Baptism, which as the washing of regeneration must of necessity be granted to the children. But we can do without the Lord's Supper, both in case of emergency and in case of lack of an elemental matter, without endangering our salvation. Here the word of Augustine is in place: 'Believe and thou hast eaten.' Baptism confers faith, without which no one can be saved. The Lord's Supper does not confer faith but strengthens and seals the faith already conferred. This strengthening and sealing in a case of necessity, as above mentioned, may be effected by the promises of the Gospel, so that there is no danger to salvation to be feared because of the lack of the Lord's Supper." Hartmann, *Pastorale*, pp. 763, 764.

While, however, Luther, Hartmann, and many other theologians deny that a layman may ever legitimately administer the Sacrament, (while not denying the validity of the Lord's Supper administered by the layman) other Lutheran theologians hold that it is right and legitimate if a layman in cases of extreme emergency serves the Lord's Supper. Cotta in his edition of Gerhardt's *Dogmatics* names the following: John Gallus, Heshusius, Bidembach, Chemnitz, Dannhauer, Hunnius, Calixt, Fecht, Spener. Walther in his *Pastorale* names also Corvinus, Deyling, Brochmand, and Grapius. We feel that because of the danger of creating disorder and because there is not that extreme necessity for the Lord's Supper as there is for Baptism, that the layman should be discouraged from administering the Sacrament excepting in very extreme cases. It is quite a different matter, of course, if in the absence of an ordained pastor a layman is authorized by the congregation to administer the Sacrament as their representative. A congregation has the right to do that.

Since the Sacraments are God's ordinances and not man's, and since no man can institute an efficacious means of grace, the Sacraments must be administered in full keeping with the divine institution, whether administered by a pastor or a layman. In order to be a valid means of grace no essential factor of the Sacrament may be changed. In other words, no other elements may be substituted for those ordained by Christ, nor may the sense of the words which Christ spoke in connection with the institution of the Sacrament be changed or other words conveying a meaning essentially different from the words used by the Lord be substituted. Beza permitted the use of other liquids in baptism, if water should not be available. Schleiermacher, who held that Jesus had used wine mixed with water, on his death-bed told his family to drink the wine while he would drink water, since the physician had forbidden him to drink wine. (*Lehre und Wehre,* 47:236.) English missions in South Africa used banana juice in the Lord's Supper, and the inspector of the Bielefeld Mission regarded that as perfectly proper. (*Lehre und Wehre,* 60:142.) Substituting a different element for that ordained by Christ is not celebrating the Lord's Sacrament, but a blasphemous perversion of a divine ordinance.

The Reformed churches deny the real presence of the body and blood in the Holy Supper. They force upon the clear words of Christ a sense which is the exact opposite of what they actually say. Therefore the Reformed churches are not celebrating the Lord's Supper, but a man-made substitute. Whatever benefit the Reformed Christian may derive from his celebration is not effected by the Lord's Supper, — that was not celebrated, — but it is either

a self-delusion, an emotional exaltation based on imaginary grounds without any foundation in Scripture, or it is wrought by the word of the Gospel, the precious promises spoken in connection with the Reformed perversion of the Holy Supper. A Sacrament must be God's Sacrament, or it is not a valid Sacrament, not a divine institution, but a human counterfeit.

Unitarians deny the Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity. Though they still use the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they connect with these terms a sense contradictory to the Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity. In a rationalistic agenda published 1808 in Germany the author, C. F. Sintenis, "Consistorialrat und Pastor zu Zerbst," offers no fewer than fifteen formulas for baptism, all of which, with one exception, omit the Trinitarian formula, substituting for it some reference to God, virtue, and immortality. The tenth formula, to be used at the baptism of an illegitimate child, offers the well-known form, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But already in the preface the author had given the direction that, whenever the Trinitarian formula is used, the pastor must give the proper explanation, *viz.*, that it is "a baptism into the faith that God the Father of all has sent Jesus who by His doctrine is to fill the world with holy spirit, with wisdom and virtue." The God of all Unitarians is an idol, and therefore their baptism, even if they use the Trinitarian formula, is not a baptism in the name of the Triune God, but a baptism in the name of an idol, an invalid baptism, a baptism not recognized by the true God, who will not give His glory to another nor His praise to idols.

In the year 1880 the pastoral conference of Baltimore asked the faculty of Concordia Seminary for an opinion on the validity of the baptism administered by Pastor Scheib, a Neo-Protestant pastor, who had for many years served the old Zion Ev. Luth. Church of Baltimore. When Scheib publicly denied the doctrine of the Trinity, many of his members left his church and later formed part of the main stock of our congregations. Some of them or their children were baptized by Scheib. Many unchurched parents had their children baptized by him. In the course of lengthy and very thorough discussions of the whole matter, the conference had asked Zion Congregation whether they still were willing to be regarded as a Lutheran congregation adhering to the Lutheran Confessions or whether, together with their pastor, they denied the doctrine of the Trinity. The congregation replied that the conference had no right to demand a confession of this sort. Two questions were proposed to the faculty. The one, Are the children of unchurched parents baptized by Scheib validly baptized? the faculty answered in the negative, since "there was no

reason to assume that these parents had demanded a Christian baptism." The second question was, Shall we create doubts as to the validity of their baptism in all members of our congregations formerly baptized by Scheib? We quote the closing paragraph of the faculty's answer. "Our answer is, The response of the church council leaves no doubt that the adherents of Scheib now have accepted his viewpoint, that, therefore, no true Baptism exists among them, and that such as have been seemingly baptized by him, must be validly baptized. If, however, you can establish a definite time until which his 'congregation' did not publicly side with him, but still adhered to the mystery of the holy Trinity, you would have to regard all those baptized up to that time as having been baptized validly. Quenstedt writes: 'A baptism administered according to Christ's institution by the minister of a congregation who is either secretly or publicly infested with the Photinian error, is efficacious and need not be repeated if his congregation does not agree with him but openly professes the opposite and adheres to the right faith.' It will hardly be possible exactly to establish such a period, but you would have to try to establish it at least approximately and then always keep in mind that the most advisable course is to prefer certainty to uncertainty. In a certain sense the principle applies here also, What is not known to have been done cannot fall under the charge of repetition." The opinion is signed by C. F. W. Walther, M. Guenther, G. Schaller, F. Pieper, R. Lange, and dated March 4, 1880. (*Lehre u. Wehre,* 26:330-342.)

When Christ instituted His Supper, He did not only distribute bread and wine, nor did He only tell His disciples that they were now eating His body and drinking His blood. We are told that He gave thanks and blessed, consecrated, the elements. Such consecration is essential. If this blessing of the Sacrament, the consecration of the elements, were omitted, we should not be doing what Christ did and what He told His disciples to do in remembrance of Him. On the manner of consecration let us hear Chemnitz. In his *Examen,* Pars II, Loc. IV, Sec. 1, § 7, he writes:

"The benediction, or consecration, is not to be divided between the Word of God and the words of human tradition. For not every word is sufficient to constitute a Sacrament, but the Word of God is required. And in order that the Word of God be proved by fire (*i. e.,* reliable), nothing is to be added thereto, Prov. 30:6. Above all, nothing is to be superadded to the testament of the Son of God, Gal. 3:15. In brief, Christ has commanded us to do in the administration of the Eucharist what He had done. He, however, did not perform a silent act but spoke. And what He said is recorded in Scripture to the extent that the Holy Spirit has judged needful for us.

"Therefore the ancient Church, although she has made use also of other exhortations and prayers, has in simplicity, yet correctly, felt that by the speech of Christ, that is, by the words of divine institution the benediction or consecration of the Eucharist is effected.

"The clearest passage of all is found in Ambrosius, *De Sacramento,* l. 4, c. 4. After he had said that the bread is the body of Christ by virtue of consecration, he at once asks, By which words and by whose speech is this benediction effected? He answers, By the words and speech of the Lord Jesus, and adds that there is a difference between this and the other speeches in this act, which are either prayers or praises. These, he says, do not pertain to the consecration or blessing of the Eucharist. But at the point where the Sacrament is to be consecrated and consummated, there the priest no longer uses his words but Christ's. And in chap. 5 he definitely states which are these words of Christ by quoting the words of institution." Cp. also *C. T. M.,* X, p. 264—267.

The Church of Rome consecrates the elements not only in the Lord's Supper, but consecrates also the water to be used in ceremonial baptism, baptism by the priest or bishop. "In administering solemn baptism, however, the Church prescribes that the water used should have been consecrated on Holy Saturday [Saturday before Easter Sunday] or on the eve of Pentecost. For the liceity (not validity) of the Sacrament, therefore, the priest is obliged to use consecrated water." (*Catholic Encyclopedia,* Vol. II, p. 272, col. B.) The manner of consecrating the water is then described as follows. "This custom is so ancient that we cannot discover its origin. It is found in the most ancient liturgies of the Latin and Greek churches and is mentioned in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (VII, 43). The ceremony of its consecration is striking and symbolic. After signing the water with the cross, the priest divides it with his hand and casts it to the four corners of the earth. This signifies the baptizing of all nations. Then he breathes upon the water and immerses the paschal candle in it. Next he pours into the water, first, the oil of catechumens and then the sacred chrism, and lastly both holy oils together, pronouncing appropriate prayers. But what if during the year, the supply of consecrated water should be insufficient? In that case, the ritual declares that the priest may add common water to what remains, only in less quantity. . . . In the United States the Holy See has sanctioned a short formula for the consecration of baptismal water. (*Conc. Plen.,* Balt., II.)"

Recognition of the simple truth that the pastor is the representative of the congregation and of God, that he is dispensing not his own goods and gifts but the mysteries of God, will influence

both his inward attitude and his outward behavior in the administration of these ordinances. It is true, the validity of the Sacrament is not affected or influenced by the personal faith and piety of the administrator, by his intention to do what Christ has commanded, or by lack of such intention. Quenstedt calls attention to this fact and to its underlying principle when he writes: "The Sacraments are not the person's who dispenses them but God's, in whose name they are being dispensed, and therefore the gracious power and effect of the Sacrament is of God alone and depends on Him alone (1 Cor. 3:5, 7), not on the qualities of the minister. . . . In the outer act (of administering the Sacrament) the minister's inner intention to do what the congregation does is by no means necessary."

The pastor is merely the spokesman of the congregation. The congregation, in turn, puts into the pastor's mouth the very words that Christ has spoken, and the Sacrament is what that word makes it, irrespective of the inner attitude or intention of the dispenser, unless the congregation deliberately changes the meaning and import of the words of institution. A pardon remains a pardon, whether the messenger announcing it to the prisoner regards it as a valid pardon or as a crying injustice, whether he rejoices in the privilege of announcing the message or does it merely as a matter of routine or inwardly even resents the duty imposed upon him.

While it is true that the attitude or intention of the pastor does not affect the validity of the Sacrament, God does not look upon the attitude and behavior of the administrator as a matter of little or no importance. Christ does not want unbelieving pastors, indifferent ministers, in His service. If the administrator of Christ's Sacraments does not believe what He says, if he has no intention of doing what the Lord, whose spokesman the pastor is, commands His Church to do, the pastor ought not to dispense the mysteries of God, he ought never to have entered the ministry, he ought to resign. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth?" Ps. 50:16. Every administration of the Sacraments would be counted against him as wickedness, as shameful, damnable hypocrisy, as a *crimen laesae majestatis;* though unclean, he presumptuously bore the vessels of the Lord, Is. 52:11. And the believing pastor must never forget that the administration of the Sacraments is not merely part of a profession, not merely a duty which he must perform in order to be worthy of his hire. Whenever he baptizes, whenever he administers Holy Communion, he is dispensing the mysteries of God, he is serving those Sacraments which cost God His own Son, and cost this Son of God His own

life's blood. In Baptism he is applying that water whereby the Holy Spirit regenerates a person born in iniquity and sin, spiritually dead, and makes him a child of God, and heir of eternal salvation. In Holy Communion he gives to the weary and troubled child of God that body and blood whereby the Son of God strengthens him whom He has redeemed by sacrificing His body and shedding His blood on the cross. Let the pastor never regard these heavenly mysteries as matters of mere routine. He is acting here as the spokesman of Christ's bride, yea, as the mouthpiece of the Bridegroom, wooing, winning, comforting, strengthening, His own beloved ones. If ever, then at the administration of the Sacraments the pastor should keep in mind the words of the apostle "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen," 1 Pet. 4:11. The whole bearing of the pastor should be in keeping with his holy calling. Let all his movements be unhurried. The words of institution, the prayers spoken during the administration of the Sacraments, are matters of too great importance to be rushed through with hurricane speed. Just as reprehensible is the other extreme, that of unduly drawing and dragging out the words. Let them be spoken in a natural manner, solemnly, in keeping with the dignity of the occasion, without becoming guilty of that unctuous sanctimoniousness so closely approaching cant. Above all, let the pastor before every administration of the Sacrament ask God to fill his heart with true reverence for these divine institutions and to grant grace that his speech and his actions may reflect that holy joy, that humble veneration, that unaffected consecration, which characterizes the faithful servant of Christ and His Church.

In this connection it is not out of place to call attention to another custom prescribed by the Church of Rome in consecrating the Eucharist. The *Tridentinum,* Sess. 22, On the Sacrifice of the Mass, chap. IX, Canon IX, anathematizes all who say that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of the consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned, or that the Mass ought to be celebrated in the vulgar tongue only. (Waterworth, p. 159.) These rites of the Church of Rome and these anathemas are the logical consequence of their denial of the Scriptural principle that the Sacrament belongs primarily not to the priest, but to the congregation. In direct opposition to these rites and in full keeping with the principle taught in Holy Writ the Lutheran Church insists that the words of the institution are to be spoken or chanted in a language which the people understand and in a loud and distinct manner, so that

the congregation, which, after all, is the real celebrant of the Sacrament, may know and be sure that the proper words of consecration have indeed been spoken over the elements. Says Luther, referring to this rite of the Roman Church: "No one can be sure whether or not they speak the words; therefore no one can be obligated to believe their secret whisperings." (St. L., XIX:1281.) And in beautiful language he describes a Lutheran celebration of Holy Communion: "God be praised, in our churches we can show a Christian a true Christian Mass according to the ordinance and institution of Christ and the real intention of Christ and the Church. Our pastor, bishop, or minister in the pastoral office, legitimately and honestly and publicly called, having been consecrated, anointed, and born a priest of Christ, steps before the altar. In the hearing of all he distinctly chants the words of the institution of the Holy Supper, takes the bread, gives thanks, distributes it, and by virtue of the word of Christ 'This is My body; this is My blood; this do' he gives it to us who are present and wish to receive it. We, especially those who would commune, kneel beside, behind, around him, man and woman, young and old, master and servant, mistress and maid, parents and children, just as God has brought us together here, all of us true, holy priests together with him, sanctified by the blood of Christ, anointed by the Holy Ghost, consecrated in Baptism. Because of this our native, inherited priestly honor and beauty . . . we do not let our pastor speak the words of Christ for himself, as though he were speaking them for his own person, but he is our mouth, and we all speak the words with him from our very hearts and with firm faith in the Lamb of God, who is there for us and with us and feeds us, according to His ordinance, with His body and blood. That is our Mass, and the true Mass, which will not deceive us. . . . If the pastor does not believe or doubts, we believe. If he should make a mistake or become confused or forget whether he has spoken the words, we are there, listen to him, hold fast to the words and are sure that they have been spoken; therefore we cannot be deceived." (St. L., XIX:1279 f.)

One more thought before we bring this paper to its close. Since the pastor is the servant of the congregation also when he is administering the Sacraments, he should not change the congregational customs needlessly, particularly if they have been long established and have on that account acquired a certain veneration among the members of the congregation. Under no circumstances ought he to make any changes in these customs without the sanction of the congregation. If a change seems advisable to him, he ought to broach the matter carefully and tactfully with due respect to the rights of the congregation and only after having

assured himself by prayerful consideration that his proposal will not cause dissatisfaction, strife, bitterness, schisms, within the congregation. Undue hastiness, insistence on his own personal preference, an inordinate hankering for innovations, the itch to change merely for the sake of changing, is certainly not compatible with the office of a servant of that God who is not the author of confusion but of peace, nor with his position as the minister of Christ's congregation, to whom, after all, the administration of the Sacraments is primarily entrusted and whose is the right to decide what customs are to be adopted, or changed, or retained, as long as such action does not conflict with God's will and Word. TH. LAETSCH

The False Arguments for the Modern Theory of Open Questions

A Translation of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's Article Entitled "Die falschen Stuetzen der modernen Theorie von den offenen Fragen," *Lehre und Wehre,* XIV (1868)

(Continued)

A further argument for this theory is the view that evidently for ecclesiastical unity not more is required than agreement in the teachings laid down in the public confession of the Church; that these are the only ones fixed by the Church itself; that on these only the Church has made pronouncements and decisions; and that everything else has to be considered as belonging to the category of open questions.

This view was voiced, for instance, by the pastors of the Iowa Synod when they in 1859 published the following "Declaration" in their synodical organ: "We treat the teaching pertaining to the 'last things' as an open question, that is, as a question in which there may be a difference of opinion without disturbance of church-fellowship and concerning which in the symbols of our Church no confessional decision has been laid down, *for which reason* both views may exist in the Church alongside each other."

In its synodical report of 1858 the same synod had made this declaration: "Accordingly we dare not deny that beside the teachings which are symbolically fixed there is found a sphere of theological knowledge containing open questions which have not as yet been answered by the Church and symbolically defined because the Church cannot symbolically fix anything unless it has passed through controversy and hence become a vital question for the Church" (pp. 14, 15). Asking German theologians for their opinion, the Iowa Synod stated in 1866: "Since concerning these

matters" (the questions pertaining to the ministerial office and the last things) "until now no universal agreement has come about in the Lutheran Church, we are of the opinion that these things, or at least those that are most controverted, had best be entirely eliminated from the public proclamation of the Church. . . . Briefly stated, we consider the teachings mentioned as open questions." (Quoted from Guericke's *Journal* in *L.* & *W.*, Vol. XIII, 363.)

Pastor Loehe, in listing the points in which there is a difference between the Saxon pastors in Missouri and Pastor Grabau, mentions as the fifth class the following: "matters which, as open questions, might be reserved for future more complete understanding." Among these matters he places the doctrine of ordination (whether or not ordination rests on divine institution) and of the relation between the ministerial office and the validity of the Sacrament, and these alleged open questions he terms something "that has come down to us as not yet fully determined," points which "rather belong to the *dubia*, the unfinished matters," "on which the Lutheran Church for three hundred years did not face the necessity of making a decision," "questions which have not yet been concluded and which the Church for three centuries has been satisfied to regard as unfinished business and almost, as it were, to ignore." (*Unsere kirchliche Lage.* By W. Loehe. Noerdlingen, 1850, pp. 91, 114, 118, 119.) In the same way Pastor Loehe writes furthermore: "I do not say *a priori* that the ministerial office is really a necessary condition for the validity and power of the Sacrament. I will leave that matter in abeyance. But because the Lutheran practise does not agree with the usual view and, at any rate for the practical minister, it is essential to have a definite theory, it seems to me that, since the confessional writings are silent on this question, the matter is still undecided although urgently requiring a decision, and I consider it best to look at it in this light." (*Ib.*, p. 117.)

A similar declaration was given by all the members of the theological faculty in Dorpat who were present at the time, Professors and Doctors Harnack, Kurtz, v. Oettingen, v. Engelhardt, and Volck, in a theological opinion on agreement in matters of doctrine, written and published at the request of the Iowa Synod. In this opinion we read among other things: "The Confessions are, as it were, the mile-stones indicating the development of the Church. . . . Accordingly our Confessions contain, in addition to those articles and doctrines of faith that have been symbolically discussed and fixed, such elements also of the universal Christian and ecclesiastical creed (we refer to the Apostolic Creed) as partly are still in the process of development, partly are not yet at all or merely by way of beginning affected by the historical evolution of doctrine, because the Church has had occasion to

express itself on them hitherto merely from one point of view or because they have not as yet become the subject of more thorough explanation and definition. In both cases, it is true, that which has been symbolically gained and fixed is presupposed as the norm and basis for further study and confessional pronouncements of the Church; however, in this period different opinions and convictions are not only unavoidable but justified and permissible. This presupposes, of course, that such matters, in the first place, are subject to the conditions which underlie the confessional activity of the Church itself, that is, that they do not contradict the Word of God and the ecclesiastical *consensus doctrinae* and that furthermore the claim be not made that they possess the dignity of publicly accepted dogmas, whose rejection would be divisive of church-fellowship. On the contrary, they must be regarded merely as what they are, Christian convictions and exegetical conclusions, which, though made conscientiously and agreeing with the analogy of faith, nevertheless have a private and individual character. Yes, even relative errors which at this stage of affairs are unavoidable can be borne by the Church without endangering its doctrinal unity. It will have to take this course, if for no other reason than that it is not yet in a position to point to the error as one condemned by the Church. . . . It is only after this exposition of the difference between a confession and confessional writings and, furthermore, the exposition of the historical nature of our Confessions, which constantly grow and develop (a characteristic on which rests the contrast, on the one hand, between fixed and developing, that is, not yet finished, dogmas in the Confessions themselves and, on the other hand, the distinction between ecclesiastical dogmas and Christian theological convictions), that we are able definitely to dispose of our question. . . . For the Church and its existenee (and that is the vital issue in the consideration of this question) at present merely that is fundamental, as we have shown, which the Church has obtained from the Scriptures as saving knowledge and has laid down in its Symbolical Books as its confession. . . . An articulate and explicit unity in those teachings that have not yet become ecclesiastical dogmas but which at the same time do not contradict the *consensus fidei* of the dogmas that have been accepted, can by no means be demanded, and the reason is simply this, that there exists as yet no acknowledged norm for their ecclesiastical status, and the question as to their agreement with Scripture is still a matter of undecided controversy. Accordingly these truths, viewed from the position of consensus in doctrine, are for the Church still open questions, left to the Christian and denominational conscience of the individual and to his investigation of Scripture-teaching. It

may be that different convictions will arise, but these may exist alongside each other without endangering the doctrinal unity in the Church. For it is dissension only in the fundamental truths taught by the Church that is incompatible with the '*consentire de doctrina*' which the Augsburg Confession terms 'indispensable for the *unitas ecclesiae*.'

"If we now survey our whole exposition, our answer to your first question must be to the effect: 1. that it not only is not contrary to the spirit and character of the Church and its strict confessional unity required for church-fellowship but altogether in keeping with it if we distinguish between fundamental doctrines, that is, in this case, doctrines that have been defined in the confessional writings, and doctrines that are *not yet* fundamental, that is, such as have up to this time become subject to a decision of the Church either only in part or not at all." Finally, in keeping with the foregoing, the faculty speaks of "justified freedom in the Church with reference to doctrinal questions that are still open." (*Opinion of the Theological Faculty of Dorpat,* etc., pp. 12-16, 31.)

In these declarations a distinction is made between those teachings which have been laid down in the Symbolical Books and those which have not been thus defined; between the teachings which have passed through controversies, have been publicly and frequently proved to be Scriptural, been shown to be of high importance for faith and life and to have an indissoluble connection with the totality of doctrine, and have been thoroughly expounded and presented in their richness and fulness, and those doctrines concerning which such statements cannot be made. We, too, admit that there is a great difference between these two classes. Without doubt errors, for instance, in the doctrine pertaining to the person of Christ after the Arian, Nestorian, and Eutychian controversies have an altogether different significance from what they had before. The same must be said of errors in the doctrine of original sin, of free will, of nature and grace, after the Pelagian controversies, of errors in the teaching of justification after the Reformation, of errors in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper after the so-called Sacramentarian controversy, and errors of a Lutheran minister pertaining to any doctrine found in the Symbolical Books after the latter had been written and accepted by our Church. To deny this difference would be equivalent to denying the blessing which God always has in store for His Church when He permits errorists to attack its treasure, Is. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:19.

We heartily subscribe to the words of Dannhauer: "Fundamental articles can, it is true, without injury to one's salvation

be both unknown and denied either before they have been revealed (for without injury to her salvation Eve did not know that the Messiah would be the Son of a virgin, for as yet the revelation pertaining to the Virgin Birth, found in Is. 7, had not been given; Nathanael is called a true Israelite even though he denied that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah) or before a clear and sufficient explanation of the revelation. For this reason the fundamental errors of the Church Fathers who were swept into not yet sufficiently unfolded *(evolutas)* controversies, before the ice was broken, are called spots or imperfections *(naevi)*, not heresies. But after these matters have been revealed, they can neither remain unknown nor be denied without injury to one's salvation.* They cannot remain unknown because we owe God progress in that which is good, Matt. 25:14 ff.; Heb. 5:12; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:14. Everybody is obligated to *strive for* perfection though not to reach perfection. Hence the unbelief of a person becomes more or less excusable according to the degree of the light offered him. Unbelief which directly opposes the foundation of faith condemns a person; the degree of the punishment varies with the degree of unbelief and the latter again with the degree of the light that had been furnished. Thus the ignorance of barbarians is more excusable than that of Christians, that of the latter more than that of Lutherans; among the latter, again, the ignorance of the rank and file is more excusable than that of the men who possess golden opportunities for progress; the ignorance of laymen is more excusable than that of teachers, and among the latter the ignorance of those who have devoted themselves entirely to the study of theology is less excusable than that of the others. Nor dare these articles be denied, because whoever denies one article denies all, just as he who breaks one link in a chain breaks all." (*Christeis.* Witenbergae, 1696, p. 45 s.)

Dannhauer writes at another place: "An error which evidently opposes a fundamental article can more readily be pardoned when it has not yet been sufficiently revealed or explained than after such revelation and explanation have been given. Nathanael could err with respect to the person of Jesus of Nazareth without injury to his salvation; he could not do it, however, after the resurrection of Christ and the proclamation of the apostles through which it was made manifest to the whole world that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. According to this principle the initial error of Flacius could be regarded pardonable because in the heat of the controversy he at first did not see that by implication his

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* We hold that Dannhauer is here speaking of normal situations obtaining in Christian countries, where everybody can be expected to come into some contact with the New Testament message. — *A.*

view made God the cause of sin. What could be pardoned in Flacius could not be pardoned in his followers. This is true likewise with respect to the inference drawn from an article and opposing faith or an article of faith if the inference has been thoroughly explained and it is of a nature which everybody can easily understand. People, as a rule, are not so dense as to let themselves be deceived where simple mathematical processes are involved. Now, whoever can handle figures can understand, and more easily at that, inferences drawn from doctrines of faith" (*Sigalion.* Argentor., 1668, p. 201 s.).

All this, as stated above, we heartily accept; but to construct on the basis of this difference the theory sponsored in the quotations submitted we have to oppose as both illogical and dangerous.

(To be continued) A.

The Province of Human Reason in Religion

(A Conference Paper)

I

At the very outset it is necessary to define what I mean by human reason. By this term I mean the entire sum of natural knowledge and powers of the human mind, including intuition and conscience and the ability to reason correctly. This human reason is a very precious gift of God and is therefore also to be prized very highly. It is a sign of great folly, corruption, aye, of Satanic delusion, to despise and teach others to despise God's gifts in nature. "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving," 1 Tim. 4:4.

It is true, Scripture tells us: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." It is true, Scripture also tells us: "If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." But in these passages of Scripture God does not tell us to despise His natural gifts. What He does teach is that we are to esteem His spiritual gifts higher than any gift of nature, for it is through His spiritual gifts only that our natural gifts will prove to be real and lasting blessings. If — remember, we say, *if* — it is necessary, *in order to retain the spiritual gifts of God,* especially eternal life and God's favor, — *if* for this purpose it is necessary to sacrifice any earthly gift, though it be our eyesight or our life, the Christian must be willing

to make that sacrifice. But we are not to throw away the least of God's natural gifts unnecessarily. Jesus had His disciples gather even the fragments that remained from a meal so that nothing would be lost.

Now, among these natural gifts, our power to reason soundly and to understand correctly is certainly one of the most valuable. Human reason, as it expresses itself especially in articulate human language, is that gift of God which lifts man above the beast. Even the heathen recognized this. Cicero writes: *"Quis hoc non iure miretur, summeque in eo elaborandum arbitretur ut quo uno homines maxime bestiis praestent in hoc hominibus ipsis antecellat."* *

I would call attention to a German work that speaks of this at length, Bettex, *Natur und Christentum.* Our Church has never become guilty of teaching that contempt for nature, natural gifts, and creation which many others teach.

This priceless gift of human reason before the fall of man into sin was, just like all his other natural gifts, though limited, yet perfect. Since man fell into sin, reason has become corrupt, and man has become foolish. All his mental powers, *e. g.,* perception, apperception, recollection, etc., have degenerated and have weakened. Men themselves recognize this folly in man. Almost every one is familiar with Shakespeare's expression "What fools these mortals be!" (*Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act III, Scene 2.) However, even in corrupt man we find this gift of God, and in some of these humans we find a mental capacity of considerable brilliancy.

The most serious corruption of human reason is found in those who deny God and refuse to recognize that which heaven and earth and all creatures demonstrate and proclaim, the glory, majesty, and eternal Godhead of the Creator. Ps. 19. Therefore Scripture rightly declares: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

When a person becomes a child of God, a believing Christian, he is regenerated, changed. The Holy Spirit begins to work in his mind and heart, and thereby also his powers of reason are affected. Such a person is delivered from his worst follies. The unbelieving fool loves his sin, his Pharisaism, and is even proud of them. "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and *whose glory is in their shame,* who mind earthly things," Phil. 3:19. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess," Luke 18:11, 12.

The Christian has gained so much intelligence and enlighten-

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* *De Oratore,* Lib. I, c. 8.

ment by the Holy Spirit that he now detests these shameful sins, and desires to be freed from the shackles of vice and wickedness. And yet, even the Christian's reasoning powers on this earth never reach that perfection which they had before the fall of man, and, of course, they remain limited.

This gift of God, human reason, is *to be used properly.* All men know something of this; the Christian certainly knows that sound reason definitely belongs to those talents which God gives to us with the command to invest and to use so that thereby we may glorify Him and benefit our neighbor. In the parable of the Pounds, Luke 19:12-26, we are told that the Lord expects those to whom He has given gifts so to use them as to gain more. He was very angry with the servant who had not done this and said, "Take from him the pound and give it to him that hath ten pounds." The Bible therefore demands of us that we walk not as fools but as wise.

And what is the *proper* use of human reason? We should certainly use it for the purpose for which it was given, for the management of our *temporal affairs.* All sane men recognize this. Those who lose all sense of this are placed in asylums. There is no difficulty about this; we ourselves have learned to read and to write and to cipher, and we teach our children this knowledge, and we also study history, and man from his reason has learned that history repeats itself. I need not discuss details to show that men with their reason have accomplished no little in mechanics, chemistry, physics, have made valuable discoveries and inventions.

Permit me to digress here just far enough to warn against a common error, namely, the overestimation of man's reason because of these accomplishments. Let us keep in mind that everything which man has discovered has been here since the creation of the world. In one respect, moreover, the discoveries and inventions of man rather reveal or indicate his stupidity than his ingenuity and shrewdness and wisdom. It took man thousands of years to discover some of the evident powers of nature, which God had given from the very beginning. Man has been *very slow* to discover and to use the gifts which God has given in such rich abundance. Men could have used the telephone, the telegraph, wireless, aeroplanes, steam engines, automobiles, thousands of years ago. All the material and powers for these things were here from the creation of the world. But it took man thousands of years to discover them and to use them. Indeed, to this day man has not found or employed all of God's gifts. True, our age has accomplished far more than earlier ages, but altogether man's progress is slow.

Again, let us also remember that this progress in mechanics, resulting in discoveries and inventions, is in accordance with the

will of God, for God said to man in the very beginning: "Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Man has not added to this creation as much as a grain of sand or a drop of water, and he has not even discovered or found all the natural blessings which exist all about him. God wants us to use our reason in fighting against sickness, crime, poverty, and disaster of any nature.

I have said that man's reason even at best is limited. It is *limited even as to things of this earth.* Remember that we are now speaking of reason in earthly matters. Our concept of time and space in which we live is limited. By our natural reason we cannot discover how this world came into existence. We know nothing of its end. We know nothing of its purpose. We do not know whether space is limited or unlimited; we can conceive of neither. To this day, man does not know what is keeping the sun burning. There is much about the weather and the proportion of the sexes of which we know nothing. Just as our five senses are limited (we can see just so far and no further; we can hear just so much and no more), so our reason is limited. This dare never be forgotten by one who wishes to use his reason correctly.

II

But now let us face the real question. What use may we make of our reason when it comes to religious matters?

The first proper use of reason in religious matters to which I would call attention is in the field of *natural* religion. Our natural reason tells us of the existence of the Creator. We appeal to the universal conviction of mankind. It is true, because of the corruption of natural reason there have been those who called themselves infidels and atheists. But in reality every man has all about him the revelation of God in nature, and if he follows what his own reason tells him, he recognizes that this creation about him did not produce itself but was fashioned by an all-wise Being. Therefore we also find the knowledge of a supreme being, the consciousness of a higher power, and the worship of some god or gods everywhere upon this earth, among all men. Plato, Cicero, Horace, Homer, Herodotus, and many more recognized the existence of divinities. Cicero, in his *De Natura Deorum,* has this sentence: *"De quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est."* Now, it is true, because of the weakness of corrupted reason and because they saw much of the folly of the superstitions of the ignorant rabble, much doubt, uncertainty, probabilism, and skepticism entered the minds of these poor people. Cicero has this sentence: *"Mirabile videtur quod non rideat aruspex quum*

aruspicem viderit." Moreover, since they, *forgetful of its limitations,* wished to use their natural reason in order to sound the very depths of God's secrets, they became lost in a very labyrinth of conjectures and fallacies. The story is well known which Cicero tells of the tyrant Hiero, who demanded of a wise man to tell him what kind of being God is. This wise man requested a day's time to consider the matter. When the day had passed and he was asked to give an answer, he demanded two more days for the proper investigation of this question. When the two days were over, he demanded three days more. When the tyrant hereupon asked him why he increased the number of days, the wise man answered, "Because the longer I think upon this matter, the darker it appears to me."

But all this is not to cause us to despise, for instance, the proofs for God's existence based upon natural reason. Sound reason must come to the conclusion that a being of infinite wisdom and power has created this world. There is the proof which is based upon the intuition of man. This is called the *ontological* proof or argument, which argues that the very idea of God in man's consciousness proves that there is a God. The use of the word *God* in our language and the reference to God by men when in distress shows this. Then there is the proof taken from the universal consent of mankind, the *argumentum e consensu gentium.* The Bible speaks of this in Rom. 1 and elsewhere. Then there is the *cosmological* proof, which forces us to assume a cause for this universe. And finally, there is also the *teleological* proof, which rests upon the universal order and adaptation of cause and effect and purpose in creation.

It is a proper use of our rational powers to insist upon these proofs and to argue from them. But we must be forewarned that no one is made a Christian through this argumentation, though it be ever so acute and ever so philosophically true.

Again, it is a right use of our reason in religious questions when we argue in favor of that which is morally right and condemn that which is morally wrong, when we speak of the Law of God which condemns wickedness and approves goodness. While it is true that in questions of law, legality, right and wrong, punishment and reward, God's revelation has influenced mankind, even those who are not Christians, yet we must admit that in man by nature there is a moral sense of right and wrong, and that we use our reason correctly when we refer to this. Our own conscience revolts against certain sins, and Scripture also tells us that the conscience excuses or condemns men from their actions, Rom. 2:14, 15. Man knows very well that there is such a thing as human depravity. Cicero in one of his Philippics tells Mark

Anthony: "Mark Anthony, you are guilty of such things as I would not even mention here among decent people." Sallust speaks of those who live *"pecudum ferarumque ritu,"* and even though some people for the sake of argument would declare that man is only a higher animal, yet they are very ready, if treated like an animal, to say, "Here, I am not a dog; I want to be treated like a human being."

The heathen Romans prided themselves on the justice of their laws, founded upon their natural ability to judge between right and wrong by reason only. They recognize the right of a man to appeal to a higher authority or the proper authority. Paul said to the centurion, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" This appeal was made to the natural sense of justice. Again, Paul told Festus, when that Roman judge wished to take him to Jerusalem and have him judged by the Jews: "I stand at Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar," Acts 25:10, 11. Throughout Scripture we find men, in these questions of natural right, to act not only according to divine revelation but according to their own common sense. David told Saul: "Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt," etc. 1 Sam. 24. Jesus, having healed a man on the Sabbath, appealed to the Pharisees' natural sense of what is right when He said: "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath-day?" Luke 14:5. St. Paul, speaking of the Cretans, said that even one of their own men called them liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. Their natural reason showed them the despicable shame of these things.

Also in defending the Holy Scriptures, in apologetics, we may use human reason; we may call attention to the *harmony* of the Scriptures, to the fulfilment of the prophecies, to its beneficial, blessed effects upon those who use it aright. Here again, we should not expect such argumentation to produce Christians, but it is certainly not wrong to use our reason, to urge these rational arguments in defense of the Scriptures. Let us keep in mind that the Bible also speaks of our duty to *stop the mouths of the braggarts* who claim that the Bible contradicts itself, that it is a conglomeration of poorly related facts, a mere mass of heterogeneous mystic claims, foolish tales, rash statements, evident falsehoods, and gross errors. True, by this we may not convert such vain talkers; but by using good, sound reasons we may stop their

mouths, so that they have nothing valid to urge in reply. The very fact that we should by our good deeds also put to silence the ignorance of foolish men appeals to our common sense, 1 Pet. 2:15: "For so is the will of God that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"; 1 Pet. 3:16: "Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."

We should also use our reason in refuting the unreasonable arguments of skeptics and unbelievers. Infidels often claim that a miracle is impossible. That claim not only contradicts the Scriptures but is perfectly unreasonable, for it demands of us to believe that God has created something greater than Himself, something which He cannot change at will. Our common sense demands that he who believes that there is a God, a Creator, must admit that this Creator can control and change His creation at will. Many similar unreasonable statements of skeptics may be, and at times are, met by reason alone. It is also reasonable to say that man is by nature a religious being and that he has a natural need of religion.

III

So far we have not as yet touched upon a very important use of reason in religion. That is what the dogmaticians call the *usus instrumentalis;* that means, that we should use our reason to understand *what* God is telling us in Holy Scripture. True, He is speaking to us of things of which our reason knows nothing, *e. g.,* forgiveness of sin, heaven and hell, the Trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit's person, etc. But He speaks of these things in human words. He employs human language, and He addresses us in this language so as to make known to us to a certain degree at least what we ought to know concerning those spiritual truths of which we have no knowledge except that which He Himself can and does reveal to us. Thus, in reading His Word, we should use our common sense, our reason, *not to sit in judgment upon the truth or justice of what God is saying but to learn exactly what it is that He tells us.* God is God; our reason is not God but a creature and must therefore be subject to God.

The Lutheran Church has always insisted that the Bible is written in language which we are to understand in accordance with the natural laws of language. It is therefore necessary that we again review the nature of language. In general, we call language a *convention* among men. By convention we mean something upon which men have agreed among themselves. There are a number of languages, but in order to state clearly what we mean, we shall simply speak of one language. In any one language there are cer-

tain sounds which, when they are made with the proper emphasis and, even better, with proper intonation and gesture, will mean certain things to those who understand them. Men have agreed on the meaning of these signs. Let us use a few plain illustrations: Persons who wear a cross thereby indicate that they are members of some Christian Church. You never see a Rabbi wearing a cross. No one should wear a watch-charm showing the square and the compass emblem except a Freemason. Any other wearing this emblem would be considered dishonest. If I say in English: "Give me that money," these sounds mean a certain thing to those who understand English; a German who does not know English does not know what I am saying, he does not understand what these words mean. Again, if I say to a German: "Gib mir das Geld," he understands that, whereas a native of India who has never learned German would not know what these sounds mean. However, words are not only used as sounds, but they are also used in script and in print. The Malayalam script or the Tamil script means nothing to me, but English script and the print of several other languages I understand. Now, God made use of this system of sounds and of signs by which man makes his opinions and feelings known to others. We know very well that God's Word is written in the letters of the Hebrew and in the letters of the Greek language. And we study these languages in order to learn what He says. We use our reason, our mental powers. We also translate these writings into the language which is more familiar to us. We use our reason, our mental powers; and that is perfectly justified. And because the same sounds may at different times mean different things, we follow those rules of human language in understanding Scripture which we also use in understanding any other book. The Bible was not written in mystic, secret, cabalistic language.

In order to understand a man aright when he uses words, we must know of what he is speaking. When a printer is speaking of his type and is mentioning their *justification,* he is using this word "justification" in a sense entirely different from that in which it is used in the Bible. He is speaking of properly spacing the lines in a column of type. Again, in the Bible the word "law" is used in different senses. The Bible declares: "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Here the Law does not refer specifically to the commandments. In this verse the word "Law," "Torah," comprehends the whole Word of God, with special emphasis upon the Gospel, just as it is used in a similar sense in Micah 4:2: "The Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." We may also compare Ps. 1:2. But when Paul speaks of the Law in distinction from the Gospel, he means

the commandments, with their threats and their promises. In interpreting Scripture here, we use our reason, and we demand of others that they interpret it according to the manner in which reasonable people deal with other writings also. In the same manner we deal with figurative language. Our reason also tells us that we are to understand a man literally unless there is something to inform us that he is speaking figuratively. When I point to a photograph of a woman and say, That is my mother, no reasonable person misunderstands me to mean that it is actually, in person and in flesh and blood, the woman from whom I was born. They know that it is a photograph of my mother. But when a man in his last will and testament writes: "I leave, give, and bequeath to my son Charles the house and ground on the southwest corner of Broadway and Olive Street in the City of St. Louis, State of Missouri, as it stands in my name today," no reasonable person would dare to claim that he is using figurative language and that he means a picture of this building. Apply these rules to the explanations given of the Lord's Supper by Reformed and by Lutherans. The Reformed use their reason to sit in judgment upon God's statement "This is My body." They say: We do not believe that. That is impossible. He could not have meant that. And while they would not dare to say that He should have said, This represents My body, yet according to their claim they have found a better expression than that which Jesus uses. That in itself is an improper use of human reason.† Then in the explanation of these words they refuse to use their reason according to the *usus instrumentalis,* which would tell us that we must understand these words literally, because they are the words of a last will and testament. The Lutherans, on the other hand, do not sit in judgment upon God's Word. They say: "However much this may all seem above our reason, since God has said it, it is true. After all, we are more rationally reasonable in this matter than those who insist that they will rationally explain away the words of the Lord Jesus.

Speaking of the words of Jesus in John 6:53 "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," it is not only contrary to Scripture, it is positively foolish and unreasonable to apply these words to the sacramental eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper, for Jesus Himself tells us that all who believe, even little children, who do not eat and drink sacramentally, have eternal life. But of this eating and drinking here in John 6 we are told that no one can receive spiritual life

† Cf. *Proceedings of Twenty-sixth Convention of the Southern District of the Missouri Synod,* p. 12.

or enter into heaven except he partake of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood in this particular manner. This therefore must refer to the spiritual eating and drinking by faith. Here again we see that those persons who wish to base their teaching upon reason are unreasonable, because they fail to recognize the figurative character of a Scripture-passage, and those people who base their religion upon the express Word of God, explained in accordance with the sound laws of language and logic and rightly understood, are, after all, more reasonable because they make a right use of their reason in apprehending what is taught in the Word.

Here we have already touched on the perfectly reasonable principle that dark, mysterious, difficult passages be explained according to those passages which are perfectly clear. All reasonable persons make use of this principle also in the explanation of secular writings. No doubtful or ambiguous statement in a book or document is cited to refute a clear and unmistakable statement of the same author. The writer's teaching is taken from his clear, definite statements, not from words whose meaning is not clear to us.

Again, when Jesus said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," He was certainly not promising His disciples revelations which would contradict what He had said up to that time. St. Paul expressly declares: "I have not shunned to declare unto you *all the counsel* of God." And Jesus Himself said: "All things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you." And when Jesus spoke His last words to His disciples, He told them that they were to teach all things whatsoever He had commanded them. He did not promise them any further revelation except that of the Pentecostal Holy Spirit. In short, the rules of hermeneutics, which stand approved by the laws of human language in general, must be observed in finding the meaning of the Bible.

Another rule of good common sense, a rule which will appeal to every one with good sound reasoning powers, is this, that, in learning Scripture, we must proceed from simple matters to the more difficult matters. In the study of mathematics, in the study of languages, in the study of history, in any study, we must begin with a few simple concepts and gradually proceed to that which is more difficult. Just so in the study of Holy Writ. "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby," 1 Pet. 2:2. St. Paul also tells the Corinthians: "I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it." And another writer tells his readers: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you

again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat," Heb. 5:12.

Horace, upon the basis of pure common sense, tells us that the proper meaning of a word is decided not by etymology but by usage, which is the judge, the law, and the norm of correct speech. But the Baptists, against such sound reason, insist that βαπτίζειν means "to immerse," because that was its original meaning, whereas from Mark 7:4 we know that this word was used of washing in general. That Baptist claim is just as foolish as if I today, when speaking of the acts of a criminal, would say to an ordinary audience, "His conversation was wicked." Every one would misunderstand that. I could not defend the use of such an obsolete meaning by referring to its Latin derivation. True, the word "conversation" originally meant "manner of life," but today, by common usage, it refers to one's speech, dialog, or exchange of opinions through familiar verbal expressions.

IV

Much has been said, much has been written, on the legitimacy of drawing conclusions or inferences from the explicit words of the text of the Scriptures. The truths of God's revelation, we note, are either explicitly stated in so many words, or they may be inferred as being implied in the words, although not explicitly stated. In one of His disputations with the Sadducees, Jesus Himself based His assertion concerning the resurrection of the dead not on some explicit statement of the Scriptures but upon a conclusion which He drew from the statement of the Old Testament that God is the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. He said: "Now, that the dead are raised even Moses showed at the bush when he called the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob; for He is not a God of the dead but of the living." In a similar manner St. Paul argues on the basis of conclusions which he draws from the explicit statement of Scripture. He writes: "He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" He is speaking to people who believe that God gave His only-begotten Son to die upon the cross for their sins. And Paul draws the conclusion, He that gave the best that He had, He certainly will give us also the other gifts that are necessary for our welfare. There are many such valid conclusions drawn from statements of Holy Writ in the writings of the apostles. And all teachers of undoubted loyalty to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church have drawn such inferences from the explicit statements of the Word of God. Luther comforted sinners by telling them, "If Jesus died

for all, then He died for you, too, although your name is not expressly mentioned in the Bible." That is a perfectly legitimate conclusion and inference based upon the Word of God. Dr. Walther, in explaining 1 Tim. 4:13, "Give attendance to reading," writes (*Brosamen,* p. 333): "What is the preacher to read? There can be no doubt as to what he is to read. It is true, the apostle does not mention the Book, but just because he does not mention the Book, we are all the more certain that he means that one great Book, "the Book," "the Scriptures," "the Word of God," because it is the Book of all books, the only book which really deserves the name of "the Book." This is a correct conclusion or inference. If space permitted, we could mention many more such legitimate inferences and conclusions based upon the express words of Scripture. But let these suffice.

However, we must remember that no such inference, no such conclusion, dare contradict any explicit statement of Holy Writ. If one argues, The Bible teaches that all men are sinners, and the Bible teaches that Jesus was a true man; therefore Jesus must also have been a sinner, his conclusion contradicts the express statement of Holy Writ, which tells us that Jesus was separate from sinners, perfectly holy, indeed, holiness itself. If one contends, God is almighty and can do whatsoever He will, therefore, since He did not convert Judas, He did not wish Judas to come to repentance, his inference contradicts an express statement of God, which tells us that God would have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

In this connection it ought also to be remembered that the universally accepted principles of logical argumentation hold good also in religious controversies; for instance, "The burden of the proof is with the affirmative." To show how foolish they are who fail to heed this rule, Mark Twain told the story of a guide in Palestine who showed him the grave of Adam. When Mark Twain asked him how he proved that this was Adam's grave, the guide told him that no man had ever proved that it was not his grave.

Thus, "A thing cannot be and not be at the same time and in the same way," is recognized by St. Paul when he states, "Our word to you was not yea and nay," 2 Cor. 1:18. St. Paul even uses reasoning when he argues concerning righteousness by the Law and righteousness by faith. He tells us that a man is justified by laws if he obeys them: "The man that doeth them shall live in them," Gal. 3:12. It will not help any one to say, I believe in the Law; if he wishes to be justified by the Law, he must have obeyed the Law. That holds good even in human courts. Again, when God justifies the ungodly by giving him the assurance, "My son, thy sins be forgiven thee," there is absolutely no other way for the sinner

to appropriate this assurance to himself but by believing it. In the very nature of things, an unconditional promise and assurance can only be accepted by believing it.

Finally, we must call attention to the use of reason in the application of Scripture. We must use good common sense and reason in applying any particular command or word of God to any particular case, person or condition. When we discuss dancing, for instance, and speak of dancing as being sinful, we must remember for whom and under what conditions this is sinful and what is sinful about it. When we say that a Christian ought to be a regular attendant at the house of God, we must use our good common sense in applying this to the case of the sick or of children or of aged persons. In discovering whether a certain action is a transgression of a commandment or not, we must frequently use good sound reason and judgment. But this use dare never go so far as to undertake to break some law of God or to prefer our own view to that which God expresses in His Word. In short, in all these cases the proper service of reason in religion is to serve *instrumentaliter*. We use our reason in arriving at the intended meaning of God's Word and in applying it to present-day conditions. We use our reason also in removing seeming contradictions of two or more passages of Scripture, *e. g.*, Rom. 3:28 and Jas. 2:24. But having arrived at the true sense of any passage, we never sit in judgment upon its truth or justice. God is always right. His foolishness is wiser than the wisdom of men, 1 Cor. 1:25. Therefore we are "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. 10:5 (margin: "reasonings"; Hirschberger: *Vernunftschluesse*). MARTIN S. SOMMER

Luther über Kirche und Amt *)

1. Was die Kirche eigentlich ist

„Wir wollen diesmal einfältiglich bei dem Kinderglauben bleiben, der da sagt: ‚Ich glaube eine heilige christliche Kirche, Gemeinschaft der Heiligen.' Da deutet der Glaube klärlich, was die Kirche sei, nämlich eine Gemeinschaft der Heiligen, das ist, ein Haufe oder Sammlung solcher Leute, die Christen und heilig sind; das heißt ein christlicher heiliger Haufe oder Kirche. . . . Die Christen sind ein besonder berufen Volk und heißen nicht schlecht Ecclesia, Kirche oder Volk, sondern Sancta, Catholica, Christiana, das ist, ein christlich,

*) Diese Auszüge aus Luthers Schriften werden in diesem Jubiläumsjahr geboten hauptsächlich um solcher Leser willen, die Luthers Werke nicht besitzen.

heilig Volk, das da glaubt an Christum, darum es ein christlich Volk heißt, und hat den Heiligen Geist, der sie täglich heiliget, nicht allein durch die Vergebung der Sünden, so Christus ihnen erworben hat (wie die Antinomer närren), sondern auch durch Abtun, Ausfegen und Töten der Sünden, davon sie heißen ein heilig Volk. Und ist nun ‚heilige christliche Kirche' so viel als ein Volk, das Christen und heilig ist, oder wie man auch zu reden pfleget, die heilige Christenheit; item, die ganze Christenheit. . . . Ecclesia soll heißen das heilige christliche Volk nicht allein zur Apostel Zeit, die nun längst tot sind, sondern bis an der Welt Ende. Daß also immerdar auf Erden im Leben sei ein christlich heilig Volk, in welchem Christus lebet, wirkt und regiert per redemptionem, durch Gnade und Vergebung der Sünden, und der Heilige Geist per vivificationem et sanctificationem, durch täglich Ausfegen der Sünden und Erneuerung des Lebens, daß wir nicht in Sünden bleiben, sondern ein neu Leben führen können und sollen in allerlei guten Werken, wie die Zehn Gebote oder zwo Tafeln Mosis fordern; das ist St. Pauli Lehre." (Von den Konziliis und Kirchen, XVI, 2269—2271.)

„Wer Christum finden soll, der muß die Kirche am ersten finden. Wie wollte man wissen, wo Christus wäre und sein Glaube, wenn man nicht wüßte, wo seine Gläubigen sind? Und wer etwas von Christus wissen will, der muß nicht sich selbst trauen, noch eine eigene Brücke in den Himmel bauen durch seine eigene Vernunft, sondern zu der Kirche gehen, dieselbige besuchen und fragen. Nun ist die Kirche nicht Holz und Stein, sondern der Haufe christgläubiger Leute; zu denen muß man sich halten und sehen, wie die glauben, leben und lehren; die haben Christum gewißlich bei sich. Denn außer der christlichen Kirche ist keine Wahrheit, kein Christus, keine Seligkeit." (Predigt am zweiten Christtage. XI, 152.)

„Also beschließe ich, daß die christliche Kirche sei nicht an irgendeine Stätte, Person oder Zeit geheftet; und obwohl der ungelehrte Haufe, der Papst mit seinen Kardinälen, Bischöfen, Pfaffen und Mönchen solches nicht will verstehen noch Wahrheit lassen sein; so stehet doch fest bei mir Herr omnes [alle], auch die Kindlein auf der Gasse mit dem ganzen Haufen der Christenheit in aller Welt und treten zu mir wider die gefärbte und erdichtete Kirche des Papstes und seiner Papisten. Fragst du aber, wie das zugehe, antworte ich kürzlich: Alle Christen in der Welt beten also: ‚Ich glaube an den Heiligen Geist, eine heilige christliche Kirche, Gemeinschaft der Heiligen.' Ist der Artikel wahr, so folgt daraus, daß die heilige christliche Kirche niemand sehen kann noch fühlen; mag auch nicht sagen: Siehe, hier oder da ist sie. Denn was man glaubt, das sieht oder empfindet man nicht." (Antwort auf das überchristliche Buch Emsers. XVIII, 1348 f.)

„Das heißt eine heilige christliche Kirche, die da glaubt an Christum, und die da will durch ihn selig werden, nicht durch unsere

Werke oder Verdienste; und was der Heilige Geist uns sagt, das sagt er allen Christen, wo sie auch sind. Das ist das Bethlehem und der Stamm Juda, da Christus herkommt. Also ist auch wahr, daß außerhalb der Kirche ist kein Prophet, kein Christ oder Lehrer und Prediger, denn es ist ein Leib und eine Seele, so aneinander hangt, als die Glieder am Leibe hangen, denn es sind Glieder des Leibes. Eine abgehauene Faust ist tot, lebt nicht, hängt nicht am Leibe; also ist auch ein Ketzer durch falsche Lehre und Unglauben von der christlichen Kirche abgehauen und ist tot; denn die außerhalb der christlichen Kirche sind, die sind tot." (Predigt über Joh. 7, 39—44. VIII, 101.)

2. Die Kirche ist unsichtbar

„Da der Evangelist spricht: ‚Hie oder da ist Christus', und dergleichen, ist von dem ganzen Christo geredet, wie das mit Gewalt erzwingt der Text Luk. 17, 20 f., da er spricht: ‚Das Reich Gottes kommt nicht mit äußerlichen Gebärden; man wird auch nicht sagen: Siehe hie, siehe da, ist's', welches die andern Evangelisten also ausreden: ‚Hie oder da ist Christus.' Das ist alles so viel gesagt: Christus' Reich steht nicht in äußerlichen Dingen, Stätten, Zeiten, Personen, Werken, sondern, wie er daselbst sagt: ‚Das Reich Gottes ist inwendig in euch.' Daraus folgt nun nicht, daß Christus nirgend sei, sondern, daß er allenthalben sei, und alles erfülle." (Wider die himmlischen Propheten. XX, 282 f.)

„Wie der Mensch ist von zweien Naturen, Leib und Seele, also wird er nicht nach dem Leibe gerechnet ein Gliedmaß der Christenheit, sondern nach der Seele, ja nach dem Glauben. . . . Wer könnte aber so unsinnig sein, der da wollte sagen, daß die Seele müßte haben ein leiblich Haupt? Das wäre gleich, als wenn ich spräche: Ein lebendig Tier müßte an seinem Leibe auch ein gemalt Haupt haben. . . . Also sagt St. Paulus, Kol. 3, 3, daß ‚unser Leben' sei nicht auf Erden, sondern ‚mit Christo in Gott verborgen'. Denn so die Christenheit wäre eine leibliche Versammlung, so könnte man einem jeglichen an seinem Leibe ansehen, ob er ein Christ, Türke oder Jude wäre; gleich als ich kann an seinem Leibe ansehen, ob er ein Mann, Weib oder Kind, schwarz oder weiß sei. Item, in weltlicher Versammlung kann ich sehen, ob er zu Wittenberg oder Leipzig, hier oder da mit andern versammelt ist; aber gar nicht, ob er glaube oder nicht. Darum habe das fest, wer nicht irren will, daß die Christenheit sei eine geistliche Versammlung der Seelen in einem Glauben und daß niemand seines Leibes halben werde für einen Christen geachtet, auf daß er wisse, die natürliche, eigentliche, rechte, wesentliche Christenheit stehe im Geiste und in keinem äußerlichen Dinge, wie das mag genannt werden." (Vom Papsttum zu Rom, wider Alveld. XVIII, 1016 f.)

„Deshalb bekennen wir im heiligen christlichen Glauben mit Recht, daß wir eine heilige Kirche glauben. Denn sie ist unsichtbar, wohnt

im Geiste an einem Orte, da niemand zukommen kann; darum kann ihre Heiligkeit nicht gesehen werden. Denn Gott hat sie so verborgen und überschüttet mit Gebrechen, Sünden und Irrtümern, mit verschiedenen Gestalten des Kreuzes und Ärgernissen, daß sie, was das Fühlen anbelangt, nie zu Tage kommt." (Auslegungen über die Epistel an die Galater. IX, 702.)

„Es ist dies Stück ‚Ich glaube eine heilige christliche Kirche' ebensowohl ein Artikel des Glaubens als die andern. Darum kann sie keine Vernunft, wenn sie gleich all Brillen aufsetzt, erkennen. Der Teufel kann sie wohl zudecken mit Ärgernissen und Rotten, daß du dich müssest daran ärgern. So kann sie Gott auch mit Gebrechen und allerlei Mangel verbergen, daß du mußt darüber zum Narren werden und ein falsch Urteil über sie fassen. Sie will nicht ersehen, sondern erglaubt sein; Glaube aber ist von dem, was man nicht siehet, Hebr. 11, 1." (Vorrede auf die Offenbarung St. Johannis vom Jahre 1545. XIV, 139.)

„Es ist ein hoch, tief, verborgen Ding die Kirche, daß sie niemand kennen noch sehen mag, sondern allein an der Taufe, Sakrament und Wort fassen und glauben muß." (Wider Hans Worst. XVII, 1338.)

3. Die Kirche, das heißt, alle Christen, hat die Schlüsselgewalt

„Die Schlüssel sind nicht des Papstes (wie er leuget), sondern der Kirche, das ist, des Volks Christi, des Volks Gottes oder des heiligen christlichen Volks, so weit die ganze Welt ist oder wo Christen sind. Denn sie können nicht alle zu Rom sein, es wäre denn zuvor die ganze Welt zu Rom, das noch lange nicht geschehen wird. Gleichwie die Taufe, Sakrament, Gottes Wort nicht des Papstes, sondern des Volks Christi sind und heißen auch claves Ecclesiae, nicht claves Papae." (Von den Konziliis und Kirchen. XVI, 2279.)

„Es ist wahr, die Schlüssel sind St. Peter gegeben, aber nicht ihm als seiner Person, sondern in Person der christlichen Kirche, und sind eben mir und dir gegeben zu Trost unserer Gewissen. St. Peter oder ein Priester ist ein Diener an den Schlüsseln; die Kirche ist die Frau und Braut, der soll er dienen mit der Schlüssel Gewalt." (Predigt am Tage Petri und Pauli. XI, 2311 f.)

„Die christliche Kirche *hat* allein die Schlüssel, sonst niemand, wiewohl sie der Bischof und Papst können *brauchen* als die, welchen es von der Gemeinde befohlen ist." (Predigt an demselben Festtage. XI, 2304.)

„Da ist kein Zweifel an, daß niemand Sünde bindet oder vergibt denn allein, der den Heiligen Geist so gewiß habe, daß du und ich's wissen, wie diese Worte Christi allhier überzeugen. Das ist aber niemand denn die christliche Kirche, das ist, die Versammlung aller Gläubigen Christi; die allein hat diese Schlüssel, da sollst du nicht an

zweifeln. Und wer ihm darüber die Schlüssel zueignet, der ist ein rechter abgefeimter sacrilegus, Kirchenräuber, es sei Papst oder wer es wolle. Von derselbigen Kirche ist jedermann gewiß, daß sie den Heiligen Geist habe, wie das Paulus nach Christo und alle Schrift reichlich beweisen und aufs kürzeste verfaßt ist im Glauben, da wir sagen: Ich glaube, daß da sei eine heilige christliche Kirche. . . . Darum ist unser Glaube also geordnet, daß der Artikel ‚Vergebung der Sünde' muß stehen nach dem Artikel ‚Eine heilige christliche Kirche', und vor dem [muß der Artikel stehen] ‚Ich glaube in den Heiligen Geist', auf daß erkannt würde, wie ohne den Heiligen Geist keine heilige Kirche ist und ohne heilige Kirche keine Vergebung der Sünden ist. Also ist nicht wahr, daß der Papst die Schlüssel habe, sondern allein die Kirche, und nicht er, sondern sie allein bindet und absolviert, darinnen er ihr dient und alle Priester. Daraus folgt, daß der Papst in seinem Amte soll sein ein Knecht aller Knechte, wie er sich rühmt und doch nicht tut, daß auch ein Kind in der Wiege mehr Recht zu den Schlüsseln hat und alle, die den Heiligen Geist haben, denn er." (Von der Beichte, ob die der Papst Macht habe zu gebieten. XIX, 845 ff.)

4. Die Kirche im übertragenen Sinne als sichtbare Gemeinschaft

„Die gegenwärtige Stelle aber [Joel 3, 22] begreift den Artikel unsers heiligen christlichen Glaubens ‚Ich glaube eine heilige christliche Kirche, die Gemeine der Heiligen'. . . . Aber damit dieser Artikel desto klarer verstanden werden könne, muß der Leser erinnert werden, daß die Schrift in zwiefacher Weise von der Kirche rede. Denn erstlich nennt sie die Kirche insgemein alle, welche dieselbe Art der Lehre bekennen und dieselben Sakramente gebrauchen, wiewohl ihr viele Heuchler und Gottlose beigemischt sind, wie Christus sagt [Matth. 20, 16]: ‚Viele sind berufen, aber wenige sind auserwählt.' Desgleichen [Mark. 16, 16]: ‚Wer da glaubet und getauft wird, der wird selig werden; wer aber nicht glaubt, der wird verdammt werden.' Denn der letzte Teil dieses Spruchs zeigt an, daß etliche getauft sind, welche dennoch nicht glauben und deshalb verdammt werden, wie auch das Gleichnis von der Hochzeit lehrt [Matth. 22, 11 ff.]. Denn diejenigen, welche bei der Hochzeit sind, sind zwar alle berufen, aber nicht alle haben hochzeitliche Kleider an, und diese werden hinausgeworfen. So malt auch das Gleichnis von dem Fischnetze [Matth. 13, 47 ff.], desgleichen von dem Samen und Unkraut [Matth. 13, 24 ff.] die Kirche als eine solche ab, in welcher Böse und Gute sind; und zwar sind die Bösen der Zahl nach überwiegend, wie der Spruch bezeugt [Matth. 22, 14]: ‚Viele sind berufen, aber wenige sind auserwählt.' Doch sind in diesem gemeinen Haufen immer etliche Auserwählte, das heißt, die das Wort in rechtem Glauben annehmen und den Heiligen Geist empfangen, denn das Predigtamt kann nicht ohne Frucht abgehen. Diesen rechtschaffenen Teil nennt die Schrift auch die Kirche, und diesem kommt eigentlich der Name

‚heilig' zu." (Auslegung des Propheten Joel vom Jahre 1545. VI, 1628 ff.)

„St. Hieronymus wirft hier eine große Frage auf: warum Paulus sie Gemeinden nenne, da sie doch nicht Gemeinden seien; denn, sagt er, Paulus schreibt an die abgefallenen Galater, die sich von Christo und der Gnade wieder zu Mose und dem Gesetze gewandt haben. Hierauf antworte ich: Paulus nennt sie ‚Gemeinden in Galatien' nach der Figur der Synekdoche, welche in der Schrift sehr häufig gebraucht wird. So, da er an die Korinther schreibt, wünscht er ihnen [1. Ep. 1, 4 f.] dazu Glück, daß ihnen die Gnade Gottes in Christo gegeben ist, nämlich, weil sie durch ihn in aller Lehre und in aller Erkenntnis reich gemacht worden wären. Und doch waren ihrer viele verführt durch die falschen Apostel und glaubten nicht, daß die Toten auferstehen usw. So nennen wir auch heutzutage die römische Kirche heilig und alle Bistümer heilig, obgleich sie abgefallen und die Bischöfe und ihre Diener gottlos sind; denn Gott herrscht mitten unter seinen Feinden [Ps. 110, 2]. Desgleichen der Antichrist sitzt im Tempel Gottes [2 Thess. 2, 4], und Satan ist mitten unter Gottes Kindern [Hiob 1, 6]. Darum, wenngleich die Kirche mitten unter dem unschlachtigen und verkehrten Geschlecht ist, wie Paulus im Briefe an die Philipper [2, 15] sagt, wenngleich sie mitten unter Wölfen und Räubern ist, das heißt, unter geistlichen Tyrannen, so ist sie nichtsdestoweniger die Kirche. Es bleibt in der Stadt Rom, obgleich sie ärger ist als Sodom und Gomorra, die Taufe, das Abendmahl, das Wort und der Text des Evangelii, die heilige Schrift, das Predigtamt, der Name Christi und der Name Gottes. Wer es hat, der hat es; wer es nicht hat, der ist nicht entschuldigt, denn der Schatz ist da. . . . Deshalb ist die Kirche heilig auch da, wo die Schwarmgeister regieren, wenn sie nur Gottes Wort und die Sakramente nicht leugnen. Denn wenn diese geleugnet werden, so kann keine Kirche sein. Deshalb ist eine heilige Kirche überall da, wo das Wort und die Sakramente ihrem Wesen nach (substantialiter) bleiben, trotzdem daß dort der Antichrist regiert, der, wie die Schrift bezeugt [2 Thess. 2, 4], sitzt nicht in einem Teufelsstalle, nicht in einem Schweinekoben oder unter einem Haufen von Ungläubigen, sondern an der edelsten und heiligsten Statt, nämlich im Tempel Gottes. Also muß der Tempel Gottes auch da sein, wo die geistlichen Tyrannen regieren, und unter ihnen erhalten werden. Darum antworten wir kurz auf diese Frage, daß die Kirche in der ganzen Welt überall da ist, wo das Evangelium und die Sakramente sind." (Ausführliche Auslegung des Galaterbriefs. IX, 42—44.)

„Die Kirche auf Erden, wenn man von der äußerlichen Gemeinschaft redet, ist eine solche Sammlung derer, so die rechte Lehre des Evangelii von Christo hören, glauben und bekennen und haben bei sich den Heiligen Geist, der sie heiligt und in ihnen wirkt durchs Wort und Sakrament; unter welchen gleichwohl etliche sind falsche Christen und Heuchler, die doch auch dieselbe Lehre einhelliglich halten und Gemein-

ſchaft der Sakramente und andere äußerliche Ämter haben." (Predigt über das Evangelium am 20. Sonntage nach Trinitatis. XI, 1759.)

„Du möchteſt aber ſagen: So nun die Kirche ganz im Geiſt und gar ein geiſtlich Ding iſt, ſo wird niemand wiſſen mögen, wo ihrer irgendein Stück in der ganzen Welt iſt; das wäre eine fremde unerhörte Sache. . . . Was wäre es ſonſt, daß uns Chriſtus lehrt, man ſolle die Schäflein weiden [Joh. 21, 16. 17], und Paulus, man ſolle die Kirche regieren [Apoſt. 20, 28], und Petrus [1 Ep. 5, 2], man ſolle weiden die Herde Chriſti, ſo die Gläubigen nirgends auf der ganzen Welt an gewiſſen Stätten gefunden werden? Denn wer will den Geiſtern predigen? Oder welcher Geiſt wird uns predigen? . . . Nun fragſt du: Bei welchen Zeichen muß ich denn die Kirche erkennen? Es muß je etwa ein ſichtbar Zeichen gegeben werden, dadurch wir zu Hauſe verſammelt werden, Gottes Wort zu hören. Antwort: Ja, es iſt ein ſolch Zeichen vonnöten; das haben wir auch, nämlich die Taufe, das Brot und allermeiſt das Evangelium. Dieſe drei ſind der Chriſten Loſung und Wahrzeichen. Wo du dieſe ſiehſt im Schwange gehen, das iſt, die Taufe, das Brot und das Evangelium, [es] ſei gleich wo oder bei wem es wolle, zweifle nicht, es ſei eine Kirche da. . . . Das iſt die Einigkeit des Geiſtes, nicht der Stätte, nicht der Perſon, nicht der äußerlichen Dinge oder Leiber. . . . Alſo ſieht auch niemand die Kirche, [man] muß ſie allein bei des Wortes Zeichen glauben; welches Wort unmöglich iſt, daß es erſchallen ſollte denn nur allein in der Kirche durch den Heiligen Geiſt." (Antwort auf das Buch des Catharinus. XVIII, 1464 ff.)

„Der Kinderglaube lehrt uns (wie geſagt), daß ein chriſtlich, heilig Volk auf Erden ſein und bleiben müſſe bis an der Welt Ende. Denn es iſt ein Artikel des Glaubens, der nicht kann aufhören, bis da kommt, das er glaubet, wie Chriſtus verheißt [Matth. 28, 20]: ‚Ich bin bei euch bis zur Welt Ende.' Wobei will oder kann doch ein armer, irriger Menſch merken, wo ſolch chriſtlich, heilig Volk in der Welt iſt? . . . Erſtlich iſt dies chriſtliche, heilige Volk dabei zu erkennen, wo es hat das heilige Gotteswort. Wiewohl dasſelbe ungleich zugehet, wie St. Paulus ſagt [1 Kor. 3, 12. 13]: Etliche haben's ganz rein, etliche nicht ganz rein. . . . Wo du nun ſolch Wort höreſt oder ſieheſt predigen, glauben, bekennen und darnach tun, da habe keinen Zweifel, daß gewißlich daſelbſt ſein muß eine rechte Ecclesia sancta catholica, ein chriſtlich, heilig Volk. . . . Denn Gottes Wort kann nicht ohne Gottes Volk ſein. Wiederum, Gottes Volk kann nicht ohne Gottes Wort ſein. . . . Zum andern kennet man Gottes Volk oder das chriſtliche, heilige Volk an dem heiligen Sakrament der Taufe, wo es recht nach Chriſti Ordnung gelehret, geglaubt und gebraucht wird. . . . Zum dritten kennet man Gottes Volk oder ein chriſtlich, heilig Volk an dem heiligen Sakrament des Altars, wo es recht nach Chriſti Einſetzung gereicht, geglaubt und empfangen wird. . . . Zum fünften kennet man die Kirche äußerlich

dabei, daß ſie Kirchendiener weihet oder beruft oder Ämter hat, die ſie beſtellen ſoll. . . . Zum ſechſten erkennet man äußerlich das heilige chriſtliche Volk am Gebet, Gott loben und danken öffentlich. . . . Zum ſiebenten erkennet man äußerlich das heilige chriſtliche Volk bei dem Heiligtum des heiligen Kreuzes, daß es muß alles Unglück und Verfolgung, allerlei Anfechtung und Übel (wie das Vaterunſer betet) vom Teufel, Welt und Fleiſch, inwendig trauern, blöde ſein, erſchrecken, auswendig arm, verachtet, krank, ſchwach ſein, leiden, damit es ſeinem Haupt, Chriſto, gleich werde." (Von den Konziliis und Kirchen. XVI, 2274—2289)

5. Die wahre ſichtbare Kirche

„Wir wiſſen keine andere Kirche, denn die da hört die Stimme Chriſti und getauft iſt. . . . Das Evangelium ſagt, daß wir an ihn glauben ſollen und darnach uns untereinander lieben." (Auslegung von Joh. 4, 1. VII, 2129.)

„Der HErr Chriſtus gebeut uns, daß wir nicht die falſche Kirche annehmen ſollen, und unterſcheidet ſelbſt zwo Kirchen, eine rechte und falſche. . . . Wie aber, wenn ich beweiſete, daß wir bei der rechten alten Kirche blieben, ja daß wir die rechte alte Kirche ſind; ihr aber von uns, das iſt, von der alten Kirche abtrünnig worden, eine neue Kirche angerichtet habt wider die alte Kirche? Das laßt uns hören. . . . Zum andern wird das niemand leugnen, daß wir das heilige Sakrament des Altars haben gleich und eben, wie es Chriſtus ſelbſt eingeſetzt und die Apoſtel hernach und die ganze Chriſtenheit gebraucht haben. . . . Zum dritten kann das niemand leugnen, daß wir die rechten alten Schlüſſel haben und ſie nicht anders brauchen denn zu binden und löſen die Sünde, ſo wider Gottes Gebot geſchehen. . . . Zum vierten kann das niemand leugnen, daß wir das Predigtamt und Gottes Wort rein und reichlich haben, fleißig lehren und treiben ohne allen Zuſatz neuer, eigener, menſchlicher Lehre, gleichwie es Chriſtus befohlen, die Apoſtel und die ganze Chriſtenheit getan. . . . Hiermit haben wir beweiſet, daß wir die rechte alte Kirche ſind, mit der ganzen chriſtlichen Kirche *ein* Körper und *eine* Gemeinde der Heiligen." (Wider Hans Worſt. XVII, 1322—1327.)

„Ich ſehe, daß eine gute Vermahnung not iſt zu tun an die, ſo jetzt der Satan anfähet zu verfolgen. Unter welchen etliche ſind, die meinen, ſie wollen der Fährlichkeit damit entlaufen, wenn man ſie angreift, daß ſie ſagen: Ich halt's nicht mit dem Luther noch mit jemand, ſondern mit dem heiligen Evangelio und mit der heiligen Kirche oder mit der römiſchen Kirche, ſo läßt man ſie mit Frieden und behalten doch im Herzen meine Lehre für evangeliſch und bleiben dabei. Wahrlich, ſolch Bekenntnis hilft ſie nicht, und iſt eben ſo viel als Chriſtum verleugnet. Darum bitte ich, dieſelben wollten ſich ja wohl vorſehen. Wahr iſt's, daß du ja bei Leib und Seel nicht ſollſt ſagen: Ich bin

Lutherisch oder päpstisch; denn derselben ist keiner für dich gestorben, noch dein Meister, sondern allein Christus, und sollst dich Christen bekennen. Aber wenn du es dafür hältst, daß des Luthers Lehre evangelisch und des Papsts unevangelisch sei, so mußt du den Luther nicht so gar hinwerfen; du wirfst sonst seine Lehre auch mit hin, die du doch für Christus' Lehre erkennst. Sondern also mußt du sagen: Der Luther sei ein Bube oder heilig, da liegt mir nichts an; seine Lehre aber ist nicht sein, sondern Christus' selbst. Denn du siehst, daß die Tyrannen nicht damit umgehen, daß sie nur den Luther umbringen, sondern die Lehre wollen sie vertilgen; und von der Lehre wegen tasten sie dich an und fragen dich, ob du Lutherisch seiest. Hie mußt du wahrlich nicht mit Rohrworten reden, sondern frei Christum bekennen, es habe ihn Luther, Klaus oder Georg gepredigt. Die Person lasse fahren; aber die Lehre mußt du bekennen." (Luthers Meinung von beider Gestalt des Sakraments, wider Carlstadt, 1522. XX, 90 f.)

6. Auch in falschen Kirchengemeinschaften finden sich Christen

„Christus werde seinen Taufstein, seine Kanzel, von der er aus lehre, seine Apostel und Lehrer in Städten und Dörfern haben, wenn auch nur einer oder zwei da sein sollten, die da glauben. . . . So sind auch unter dem Papsttum allezeit etliche Gläubige gewesen, und deren sind auch noch da, die wir nicht kennen, welche Gott durch sein Wort und die Sakramente erhält, wiewohl der Teufel und der Papst es nicht gerne sehen." (Auslegung von Ps. 45, 17. V, 468.)

„Und dieselbige Christenheit ist nicht allein unter der römischen Kirche oder Papst, sondern in aller Welt, wie die Propheten verkündigt haben, daß Christi Evangelium sollte in alle Welt kommen, Ps. 2, 8; Ps. 19, 5. Daß also unter Papst, Türken, Persen, Tartern und allenthalben die Christenheit zerstreuet ist leiblich, aber versammelt geistlich in einem Evangelio und Glauben, unter ein Haupt, das JEsus Christus ist." (Großes Bekenntnis vom Abendmahl Christi. XX, 1101.)

„Wohlan, es soll und kann niemand von den Christen für die Schwärmer beten, noch sich ihrer annehmen. Sie sind dahingegeben und sündigen zum Tode (wie St. Johannes sagt). Von den Meistern rede ich; dem armen Volk, so unter ihnen ist, helfe der liebe HErr Christus von solchen Seelenmördern." (Kurzes Bekenntnis vom heiligen Sakrament. XX, 1771.)

„Deshalb ist die Kirche heilig auch da, wo die Schwarmgeister regieren, wenn sie nur Gottes Wort und die Sakramente nicht leugnen. Denn wenn diese geleugnet werden, so kann keine Kirche sein. Deshalb ist eine heilige Kirche überall da, wo das Wort und die Sakramente ihrem Wesen nach (substantialiter) bleiben, trotzdem daß dort der Antichrist regiert. . . . Also muß der Tempel Gottes auch da sein, wo die geistlichen Tyrannen regieren und unter ihnen erhalten werden." (Ausführliche Erklärung des Galaterbriefs. IX, 44.)

„Müssen wir doch bekennen, daß die Schwärmer die Schrift und Gottes Wort haben in andern Artikeln, und wer es von ihnen hört und glaubt, der wird selig, wiewohl sie unheilige Ketzer und Lästerer Christi sind. Es ist nicht eine geringe Gnade, daß Gott sein Wort auch durch böse Buben und Gottlose gibt." (Brief an zwei Pfarrherren, von der Wiedertaufe. XVII, 2212.)

7. Falschen Lehrern gegenüber ist Bekenntnis vonnöten

„Ihr macht euch mit Stillschweigen und Bemänteln selbst verdächtig; so ihr's aber glaubet, wie ihr's vor mir redet, so redet auch solches in der Kirche, in lectionibus, concionibus et privatis colloquiis, und stärket eure Brüder und helft den Irrenden wieder auf den rechten Weg und widersprecht den mutwilligen Geistern, sonst ist euer Bekenntnis nur ein Larvenwerk und nichts nütze. Wer seine Lehre, Glauben und Bekenntnis für wahr, recht und gewiß hält, der kann mit andern, so falsche Lehre führen oder derselben zugetan sind, nicht in einem Stalle stehen noch immerdar gute Worte dem Teufel und seinen Schuppen geben. Ein Lehrer, der zu den Irrtümern stilleschweigt und will gleichwohl ein rechter Lehrer sein, der ist ärger denn ein öffentlicher Schwärmer und tut mit seiner Heuchelei größeren Schaden denn ein Ketzer, und ist ihm nicht zu vertrauen; er ist ein Wolf und ein Fuchs, ein Mietling und ein Bauchdiener usw. und darf Lehre, Wort, Glauben, Sakrament, Kirchen und Schulen verachten und übergeben; er liegt entweder mit den Feinden unter einer Decke, oder er ist ein Zweifler und Windfaher und will sehen, wo es hinauswolle, ob Christus oder der Teufel obsiegen werde; oder ist ganz und gar bei sich selbst ungewiß und nicht würdig, daß er ein Schüler, will geschweigen ein Lehrer heißen solle, und will niemand erzürnen noch Christo sein Wort reden noch dem Teufel und der Welt wehetun." (Gespräch mit D. Georg Major. XVII, 1180.)

„Deshalb muß man diese Stelle [Gal. 5, 9] wohl merken wider diesen ihren Grund (argumentum), mit dem sie uns verleumden, daß wir die Liebe verletzen zum größten Schaden der Kirche. Wir sind gewißlich bereit, mit allen Frieden zu halten und ihnen Liebe zu erzeigen, wenn sie uns nur die Lehre des Glaubens ganz und unverletzt lassen wollen. Wenn wir dies nicht erlangen können, so fordern sie vergeblich Liebe von uns. Verflucht sei die Liebe, welche bewahrt wird zum Schaden der Lehre des Glaubens, welcher alles weichen muß, Liebe, Apostel, Engel vom Himmel usw. . . . Wenn sie glaubten, daß es das Wort Gottes wäre, würden sie nicht so mit demselben spielen, sondern es in höchsten Ehren halten und ihm ohne alle Disputation und Zweifel Glauben beimessen und wüßten, daß ein Wort Gottes alle und alle Worte Gottes eins wären; desgleichen wüßten sie, daß ein Artikel alle, und alle Artikel einer sind und daß, wenn man einen verloren hat, allmählig alle verloren werden. . . . Deshalb

wollen wir sie hoch rühmen lassen von der Eintracht und der christlichen Liebe, wir wollen dagegen die Herrlichkeit des Wortes und den Glauben hoch erheben. Die Liebe kann bisweilen (in loco) ohne Gefahr vernachlässigt werden, aber nicht gleicher Weise das Wort und der Glaube. Die Aufgabe der Liebe ist es, alles zu dulden, allem zu weichen. Dagegen kommt es dem Glauben zu, nichts zu leiden, niemandem zu weichen. . . . Darum, wenn du Gott in einem Artikel verleugnest, so hast du ihn in allen verleugnet, weil Gott nicht in viele Artikel geteilt wird, sondern alles ist in jedem einzelnen Artikel, und einer ist in allen Artikeln." (Ausführliche Erklärung des Galaterbriefs. IX, 645 f.)

„Sie sagen, daß man solle Frieden haben, und hören selbst nicht auf, solchen Unfrieden zu mehren, wie jedermann sieht und hört, ist auch ihre Freude, je weiter es geht. Item, sie sagen, es sei eine geringe Sache, und ist doch jetzt kein Stück, das sie so fast treiben, sorgen und anhalten; die andern Stücke alle liegen stille. Hier werden sie Märtyrer und Heilige. . . . Wohlan denn, weil sie denn so gar verrucht sind und alle Welt spotten, will ich eine Lutherische Warnung dazu tun und sage also: Verflucht sei solche Liebe und Einigkeit in Abgrund der Hölle, darum daß solche Einigkeit nicht allein die Christenheit jämmerlich zertrennt, sondern sie nach teuflischer Art noch zu solchem ihrem Jammer spottet und närret. . . . Nein, mir nicht, lieben Herren, des Friedens und der Liebe. Wenn ich einem Vater und Mutter, Weib und Kind erwürgt und wollt ihn auch dazu würgen und darnach sagen: Halt Friede, lieber Freund, wir wollen uns liebhaben, die Sache ist nicht so groß, daß wir drum sollten uneins werden; was sollt er zu mir sagen? O wie lieb sollte er mich haben! Also, die Schwärmer erwürgen mir Christum, meinen HErrn, und Gott Vater in seinen Worten, dazu meine Mutter, die Christenheit, samt meinen Brüdern, wollen dazu mich auch tot haben, und sagen darnach: Ich solle Friede haben, sie wollen der Liebe mit mir pflegen. Ich will aber die Schwärmer hier aufdecken, daß jedermann sehe, was für ein Geist in ihnen steckt, auf daß die, so ihnen anhangen, erfahren, wem sie glauben und folgen. . . . Lieber, Gottes Wort ist Gottes Wort, das darf nicht viel Menkelns. Wer Gott in einem Worte lügenstraft und lästert oder spricht, es sei geringe Ding, daß er gelästert und gelügenstraft wird, der lästert den ganzen Gott und achtet geringe alle Lästerung Gottes. Es ist ein Gott, der sich nicht teilen läßt, oder an einem Ort loben, am andern schelten, an einem Ort ehren, am andern verachten." (Daß diese Worte usw. noch fest stehen wider die Schwärmgeister. XX, 773—775.)

„Zudem, so ist dieser Artikel von der wirklichen Gegenwart im heiligen Abendmahl nicht eine Lehre oder Aufsatz außer der Schrift, von Menschen erdichtet, sondern klärlich im Evangelio durch helle, reine, ungezweifelte Worte Christi gestiftet und gegründet, und von Anfang

der christlichen Kirche in aller Welt bis auf diese Stunden einträchtiglich geglaubt und gehalten, wie das ausweisen der lieben Väter Bücher und Schrift, beide griechischer und lateinischer Sprache, dazu der tägliche Brauch und das Werk mit der Erfahrung, bis auf diese Stunde. Welches Zeugnis der ganzen heiligen christlichen Kirche (wenn wir schon nichts mehr hätten) soll uns allein genugsam sein, bei diesem Artikel zu bleiben und darüber keinen Rottengeist zu hören noch zu leiden. Denn es gefährlich ist und erschrecklich, etwas zu hören oder zu glauben wider das einträchtige Zeugnis, Glauben und Lehre der ganzen heiligen christlichen Kirche, so von Anfang her nun über fünfzehn hundert Jahre in aller Welt einträchtiglich gehalten hat." (Wider etliche Rottengeister. XX, 1684.)

8. Von dem geistlichen Priestertum aller Christen

„Darum sind alle Christgläubigen das heilige und geistliche Priestertum, so auf diesen Stein gebauet sind. Denn sintemal Christus der Bräutigam ist und wir die Braut, so hat die Braut alles, was der Bräutigam hat, auch seinen eigenen Leib." (Predigt über 2 Petr. 2, 5. IX, 1173.)

„Aus diesem Spruch [1 Petr. 2, 9] habe ich beweiset, daß alle Christen Priester sind. Denn Petrus hat das zu allen Christen gesagt, wie die Worte lauten und mit Namen das Volk ausdrücken. . . . Darum, den närrischen Traum des Emsers zu meiden, ist zu wissen, daß die Heilige Schrift, sonderlich im Neuen Testament, da die Figuren aus sind, nicht mehr denn von einem geistlichen Priestertum schreibt. . . . Die Schrift macht uns alle gleich Priester, wie gesagt ist." (Antwort auf das überchristliche Buch Emsers. XVIII, 1280—1282.)

„Daher auch der Heilige Geist im Neuen Testament mit Fleiß verhütet hat, daß der Name sacerdos, Priester oder Pfaffe, auch keinem Apostel noch einigen andern Ämtern ist gegeben, sondern ist allein der Getauften oder Christen Name, als ein angeborner, erblicher Name aus der Taufe; denn unser keiner wird in der Taufe ein Apostel, Prediger, Lehrer, Pfarrherr geboren, sondern eitel Priester und Pfaffen werden wir alle geboren." (Von der Winkelmesse und Pfaffenweihe. XIX, 1260.)

„Wir bestehen fest auf dem, daß kein ander Wort Gottes ist denn das allein, das allen Christen zu verkündigen geboten wird; daß nicht eine andere Taufe ist denn die, die alle Christen geben mögen; daß kein ander Gedächtnis ist des Abendessens des HErrn denn das, so ein jeder Christ begehen mag, welches also zu halten Christus hat eingesetzt; auch daß keine andere Sünde ist, denn die ein jeder Christ binden und auflösen mag; item, daß kein Opfer sei denn der Leib eines jeden Christenmenschen; daß auch niemand beten kann oder möge denn allein der Christ; dazu daß niemand urteilen soll über die Lehre denn allein der Christ. Diese sind aber je die priesterlichen und königlichen Ämter." (Wie man Kirchendiener wählen und einsetzen soll. X, 1590.)

„Hier ſieheſt du klar, wes das Recht iſt, zu urteilen die Lehre. Biſchöfe, Papſt, Gelehrte und jedermann hat Macht zu lehren; aber die Schafe ſollen urteilen, ob ſie Chriſti Stimme hören oder der Fremden Stimme.“ (Daß eine chriſtliche Verſammlung oder Gemeinde Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehre zu urteilen uſw. X, 1541.)

„Dieſe drei Amt hat er auch uns allen gegeben; darum weil er Prieſter iſt und wir ſeine Brüder ſind, ſo haben alle Chriſten Macht und Befehl, daß ſie predigen und verkündigen ſollen Gottes Gnade und Tugend uſw. und vor Gott treten, daß einer für den andern bitte und ſich ſelbſt Gott opfere; doch, wie St. Paulus ſagt, daß alles ordentlich zugehe, daß nicht ein jeglicher in der Gemeinde lehre und die heiligen Sakramente reiche, ſondern die allein, ſo von der Gemeinde berufen ſind und ihnen das Amt befohlen wird.“ (Predigt über 1 Petr. 2, 5. IX, 1173.)

„So wir aber Chriſten worden ſind durch dieſen Prieſter und ſein Prieſteramt und in der Taufe durch den Glauben ihm einverleibt, ſo kriegen wir auch das Recht und die Macht, das Wort, ſo wir von ihm haben, zu lehren und zu bekennen vor jedermann, ein jeglicher nach ſeinem Beruf und Stande. Denn ob wir wohl nicht alle im öffentlichen Amt und Beruf ſind, ſo ſoll und mag doch ein jeglicher Chriſt ſeinen Nächſten lehren, unterrichten, vermahnen, tröſten, ſtrafen durch Gottes Wort, wann und wo jemand das bedarf, als Vater und Mutter ihre Kinder und Geſinde, ein Bruder, Nachbar, Bürger oder Bauer den andern. Denn es kann ja ein Chriſt der Zehn Gebote, des Glaubens, Gebets uſw. den andern, ſo noch unverſtändig oder ſchwach iſt, unterrichten oder vermahnen, und der es hört, ſchuldig iſt, ſolches auch als Gottes Wort von ihm anzunehmen und mit öffentlich zu bekennen.“ (Auslegung von Pſ. 110, 4. V, 1038.)

„Denn es wäre viel ſicherer und heilſamer [nämlich, als daß die Böhmen ſich wieder dem Papſt unterwürfen], daß ein jeder Hausvater daheim in ſeinem Hauſe vorläſe das Evangelium. Und dieweil auch die einmütige Meinung und Brauch der ganzen Welt zuläßt den Laien, daß ſie taufen mögen, wäre auch mein Rat, daß die Hausväter, ſo ihnen Kinder geboren würden, dieſelben ſelber tauften und alſo nach der Lehre Chriſti ſich ſelbſt und die Ihren regierten, ob ſie ſchon durch ihr Leben lang das Sakrament des Altars nicht empfangen möchten. Denn das Sakrament des Altars bei Gefährlichkeit des Heils nicht vonnöten iſt; aber das Evangelium und die Taufe allein genugſam ſind, dieweil allein der Glaube fromm macht und die Liebe allein wohl lebt.“ (Wie man Kirchendiener wählen und einſetzen ſoll. X, 1557.)

„Auf die Frage, ſo Euer guter Freund . . . Euch vorgelegt, ſchriftlich und an mich zu gelangen laſſen begehrt, iſt dies meine Antwort, daß Ihr dem guten Herrn und Freund wollet anzeigen, daß er nicht ſchuldig ſei, ſolche Weiſe vorzunehmen, ſich und ſein Hausvölklein zu kommunizieren, auch dazu unnötig, weil er dazu nicht berufen noch Befehl hat

und ohne das, wo es die tyrannischen Kirchendiener, so es zu tun wohl schuldig sind, ihm noch den Seinen nicht reichen wollen, dennoch wohl kann in seinem Glauben selig werden durchs Wort; es wird auch ein groß Ärgernis machen, also in den Häusern das Sakrament hin und wieder zu reichen, und doch die Länge kein gut Ende nehmen und eitel Spaltung und Sekten sich erheben. . . . Daß aber ein Hausvater die Seinen das Wort Gottes lehrt, ist recht und soll so sein; denn Gott hat befohlen, daß wir unsere Kinder und Haus sollen lehren und ziehen, und ist das Wort einem jeglichen befohlen; aber das Sakrament ist ein öffentliches Bekenntnis und soll offenbarliche Diener haben, weil dabei steht, als Christus sagt, man solle es tun zu seinem Gedächtnis, das ist, wie St. Paulus sagt, zu verkündigen oder predigen des HErrn Tod, bis er komme, und daselbst auch spricht, man solle zusammenkommen, und hart straft die, so sonderlich ein jeglicher für sich des HErrn Abendmahl gebrauchen; so doch nicht verboten, sondern geboten ist einem jeglichen, insonderheit sein Haus zu lehren mit Gottes Wort, sich selbst auch dazu, und sich doch niemand selbst taufen usw. Denn es ist gar ein anderes um ein öffentlich Amt in der Kirche und um einen Hausvater über sein Gesinde; darum sie nicht zu mengen sind noch zu trennen. Dieweil nun hier keine Not noch Beruf ist, soll man ohne Gottes gewissen Befehl hier nichts aus Andacht vornehmen, denn es wird nichts Gutes daraus." (Von der Hauskommunion. X, 2224—2226.)

9. Von der öffentlichen Ausübung der Rechte und Pflichten des geistlichen Priestertums

„Aber die dritte Weise, so die rechte Art der evangelischen Ordnung haben sollte, müßte nicht so öffentlich auf dem Platz geschehen unter allerlei Volk, sondern diejenigen, so mit Ernst Christen wollten sein und das Evangelium mit Hand und Mund bekennen, müßten mit Namen sich einzeichnen und etwa in einem Hause allein sich versammeln zum Gebet, zu lesen, zu taufen, das Sakrament zu empfahen und andere christliche Werke zu üben. In dieser Ordnung könnte man die, so sich nicht christlich hielten, kennen, strafen, bessern, ausstoßen oder in den Bann tun nach der Regel Christi Matth. 18, 15 f." (Deutsche Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes. X, 229.)

„Darum soll ein jeder, der ein Christ sein will, gewiß sein und bei sich wohl erwägen, daß wir alle gleicherweise Priester sind, das ist, daß wir gleiche Gewalt an dem Worte Gottes und einem jeden Sakrament haben, doch daß es sich nicht für einen jeden gebühre, sich derselben zu gebrauchen, es sei denn aus Verwilligung der Gemeine oder durch Beruf der Oberen. Denn was aller insgemein ist, kann niemand insonderheit an sich ziehen, bis er dazu berufen wird." (Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft der Kirche. XIX, 117.)

„Wer sind die, die er also anredet? Sind es nicht alle Christen?

Ist's nicht die christliche Gemeinde? . . . Denn die Schlüssel sind der ganzen Gemeinde aller Christen und eines jeden, der ein Glied ist derselben Gemeinde. . . . Das Amt des Wortes ist allen gemeinsam. Es ist aber das ‚binden' und ‚entbinden' gänzlich nichts anders denn predigen das Evangelium und dasselbe in Gebrauch zu wenden. Denn was heißt ‚auflösen' anders denn verkündigen, daß die Sünden vor Gott erlassen sind? Was heißt ‚binden' denn das Evangelium weggenommen und verkündigen, daß die Sünden behalten werden? Darum, sie wollen oder wollen nicht, so erhalten wir, daß die Schlüssel allen miteinander gemeinsam sind; dieweil sie nichts anders sind denn das Amt, dadurch man das Wort in Brauch und übung kehrt." (Wie man Kirchendiener wählen und einsetzen soll. X, 1579—1581.)

„Daß aber die Apostel auch zuerst in fremde Häuser gingen und predigten, des hatten sie Befehl und waren dazu verordnet, berufen und gesandt, daß sie an allen Orten sollten predigen, wie Christus sprach [Mark. 16, 15]: ‚Gehet hin in alle Welt und prediget allen Kreaturen.' Aber darnach hat niemand mehr solchen gemeinen apostolischen Befehl, sondern ein jeglicher Bischof oder Pfarrherr hat sein bestimmt Kirchspiel oder Pfarre, welche St. Petrus 1 Petr. 5, 3 auch darum Kleros heißt, das ist, Teile, daß einem jeglichen sein Teil Volks befohlen ist; wie St. Paulus Tito auch schreibt; darin kein anderer oder Fremder ohne sein Wissen und Willen sich unterstehen soll, seine Pfarrkinder zu lehren, weder heimlich noch öffentlich." (Auslegung von Ps. 82, 4. V, 721.)

„Niemals aber ist es von Gott zugelassen, daß ein Weib regiere. . . . Das Weib ist zu seinem Nutzen geschaffen, nämlich daß sie ihre Klugheit anwende und ihre Vernunft gebrauche zur Auferziehung ihrer Kinder. Denn wie ein jeglicher geschaffen ist, so wirkt er auch am geeignetsten. ‚Es greift ein Weib viel besser zu einem kleinen Kind mit dem kleinsten Finger denn ein Mann mit beiden Fäusten.'" (Auslegung des Predigers Salomo, 7, 27. V, 1517.)

„Wahr ist's aber, daß in diesem Stück [nämlich was den öffentlichen Gebrauch der Gnadenmittel anlangt] der Heilige Geist ausgenommen hat Weiber, Kinder und untüchtige Leute, sondern allein tüchtige Mannspersonen hiezu erwählet. . . . Summa, es soll ein geschickter, auserwählter Mann sein, dahin Kinder, Weiber und andere Personen nicht tüchtig, ob sie wohl tüchtig sind, Gottes Wort zu hören, Taufe, Sakrament, Absolution zu empfahen und rechte heilige Christen mit sind. Denn solchen Unterschied auch die Natur und Gottes Kreatur gibt, daß Weiber (viel weniger Kinder oder Narren) kein Regiment haben können noch sollen, wie die Erfahrung gibt, und Moses 1 Mos. 3, 16 spricht: ‚Du sollst dem Mann untertan sein'; das Evangelium aber solch natürlich Recht nicht aufhebt, sondern bestätigt als Gottes Ordnung und Geschöpfe." (Von den Konziliis und Kirchen. XVI, 2280.)

„Im Neuen Teſtament ordnet der Heilige Geiſt durch St. Paulum, daß die Weiber ſollen ſchweigen in der Kirche oder Gemeine, und ſpricht, es ſei des HErrn Gebot, 1 Kor. 14, 34, und er doch wohl wußte, daß Joel zuvor verkündigt hatte, Gott wolle ſeinen Geiſt auch auf ſeine Mägde ausgießen, dazu geſehen hatte die vier Töchter Philippi weisſagen, Apoſt. 21, 9. Aber in der Gemeine oder Kirche, da das Predigtamt iſt, ſollen ſie ſchweigen und nicht predigen. Sonſt mögen ſie wohl mitbeten, ſingen, loben und Amen ſprechen und daheim leſen und ſich untereinander lehren, vermahnen, tröſten, auch die Schrift auslegen, das beſte ſie immer können." (Von Schleichern und Winkelpredigern. XX, 1673 f.)

„Wenn du willſt die Chriſten anſehen, ſo mußt du keinen Unterſchied anſehen und nicht ſagen: Das iſt ein Mann oder ein Weib, ein Knecht oder Herr, alt oder jung, wie Paulus ſagt Gal. 3, 28. Es iſt alles *ein* Ding und eitel geiſtlich Volk. Darum ſind ſie allzumal Prieſter, mögen alle Gottes Wort verkündigen, ohne daß Weiber nicht in der Gemeinde reden ſollen, ſondern die Männer predigen laſſen, um des Gebots willen, daß ſie ihren Männern ſollen untertan ſein, wie St. Paulus lehret 1 Kor. 14, 34. Solche Ordnung läßt Gott bleiben, macht aber nicht Unterſchied der Gewalt. Wo aber nicht Männer da wären, ſondern eitel Weiber, als in Nonnenklöſtern, da möchte man auch ein Weib unter ihnen aufwerfen, das da predigte." (über 1 Petr. 2, 5. IX, 1014 f.)

„Ein Biſchof als Biſchof hat keine Macht ſeiner Kirche irgendeine Satzung oder Zeremonie aufzulegen, es ſei denn mit der ausdrücklichen oder auch ſtillſchweigenden Bewilligung der Kirche. Denn die Kirche iſt frei und die Herrin, und die Biſchöfe ſollen nicht Herren ſein über den Glauben der Kirchen, ſie auch nicht wider ihren Willen beſchweren oder unterdrücken. Denn ſie ſind nur Diener und Haushalter, nicht Herren der Kirche. Wenn aber die Kirche eingewilligt hat als ein Leib mit dem Biſchofe, ſo können ſie alles auflegen, was ſie immer wollen, wenn nur die Gottſeligkeit nicht verletzt wird, dasſelbe auch wiederum nach ihrem Belieben abtun." (Antwort an Melanchthon auf die ihm zugeſchickten Fragen von den Menſchenſatzungen. XVI, 1014.)

10. Von dem Pfarramt oder Predigtamt in der chriſtlichen Gemeinde, als von dem allgemeinen Prieſtertum unterſchieden

„Nun iſt zweierlei Berufung zum Predigtamt: eine geſchieht ohne Mittel von Gott; die andere durch die Menſchen und gleichwohl auch von Gott. . . . Die andere Berufung geſchieht durch Menſchen, und dasſelbige doch auch von Gott, nämlich durch Mittel. Und das iſt eine Berufung der Liebe, als wenn man einen aus dem Haufen erwählet zu einem Biſchof oder Prediger, zu dem man ſich verſiehet, er habe das Wort Gottes und könne es andern auch durch ſeine Lehre und Predigt mitteilen. . . . Die chriſtliche Kirche hat allein die Schlüſſel, ſonſt

niemand; wiewohl sie der Bischof und Papst können gebrauchen als die, welchen es von der Gemeinde befohlen ist. Ein Pfarrer pflegt des Amts der Schlüssel, tauft, predigt, reicht das Sakrament und tut andere Ämter, damit er der Gemeinde dient, nicht von seinetwegen, sondern der Gemeinde wegen; denn er ist ein Diener der ganzen Gemeinde, welchem der Schlüssel gegeben ist, ob er gleichwohl ein Bube sei." (Evangelienpostille, XI, 1910 f. 2304.)

„Hie [Matth. 18, 19. 20] hören wir, daß auch zween oder drei, in Christi Namen versammelt, eben alles Macht haben, was St. Petrus und alle Apostel. Denn der HErr ist selbst da, wie er auch sagt Joh. 14, 23. . . . Wir haben hie den HErrn selbst über alle Engel und Kreaturen, der sagt, sie sollen alle gleiche Gewalt, Schlüssel und Amt haben, auch zween schlechte Christen allein, in seinem Namen versammelt." (Wider das Papsttum zu Rom, vom Teufel gestiftet. XVII, 1074 f.)

„Darum ist des Bischofs Weihe nichts anders, denn als wenn er an Statt und Person der ganzen Versammlung einen aus dem Haufen nähme, die alle gleiche Gewalt haben, und ihm beföhle, dieselbe Gewalt für die andern auszurichten; gleich als wenn zehn Brüder, Königskinder, gleiche Erben, einen erwählten, das Erbe für sie zu regieren; sie wären je alle Könige und gleicher Gewalt, und doch einem zu regieren befohlen wird." (An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation. X, 271.)

„Weil aber christliche Gemeinde ohne Gottes Wort nicht sein soll noch kann, folgt aus vorigem stark genug, daß sie dennoch Lehrer und Prediger haben müssen, die das Wort treiben . . .; müssen wir uns nach der Schrift halten und unter uns selbst berufen und setzen diejenigen, so man geschickt dazu findet und die Gott mit Verstand erleuchtet und mit Gaben dazu gezieret hat. . . . Wenn er aber ist, da Christen an dem Ort sind, die mit ihm gleiche Macht und Recht haben, da soll er sich selbst nicht hervortun, sondern sich berufen und hervorziehen lassen, daß er an Statt und Befehl der andern predige und lehre. . . . Es soll kein Bischof jemand einsetzen ohne der Gemeinde Wahl, Willen und Berufen, sondern soll den Erwählten und Berufenen von der Gemeinde bestätigen. Tut er's nicht, daß derselbe dennoch bestätigt sei durch der Gemeinde Berufen." (Daß eine christliche Versammlung Recht habe usw. X, 1543 ff.)

„Doch dies alles haben wir allein von gemeinsamem Recht und Macht aller Christen gesagt. Denn dieweil allen Christen alle Dinge gemeinsam sollen sein, . . . so will's nicht gebühren einem, der sich von ihm selbst hervor wollte tun und ihm allein zueignen, das unser aller ist. . . . Das erfordert aber der Gemeinschaft Recht, daß einer, oder wieviel der Gemeinde gefallen, erwählt und aufgenommen werden, welche an Statt und im Namen aller derer, so eben dasselbe Recht

haben, dieſe Ämter öffentlich ausüben; auf daß nicht eine ſcheußliche Unordnung geſchehe in dem Volk Gottes und aus der Kirche werde ein Babylon." (Wie man Kirchendiener wählen und einſetzen ſoll. X, 1589.)

„Der Pfarrherr hat ja den Predigtſtuhl, Taufe, Sakrament inne, und alle Seelſorge iſt ihm befohlen. . . . Darum heißt's alſo: Entweder beweiſet den Beruf und Befehl zu predigen oder kurzum ſtillgeſchwiegen und das Predigen verboten. Denn es heißt ein Amt, ja ein Predigtamt. Ein Amt aber kann niemand haben außer und ohne Befehl und Beruf." (Von Schleichern und Winkelpredigern. XX, 1666. 1669.)

„Es iſt wahr, alle Chriſten ſind Prieſter, aber nicht alle Pfarrer. Denn über das, daß er ein Chriſt und Prieſter iſt, muß er auch ein Amt und ein befohlen Kirchſpiel haben. Der Beruf und Befehl macht Pfarrherren und Prediger." (Auslegung von Pſ. 82, 4. V, 722.)

„Siehe, alſo muß man das Predigtamt oder Dienſtamt ſcheiden von dem gemeinen Prieſterſtande aller getauften Chriſten. Denn ſolch Amt iſt nicht mehr denn ein öffentlicher Dienſt, ſo etwan einem befohlen wird von der ganzen Gemeinde, welche alle zugleich Prieſter ſind." (Auslegung von Pſ. 110, 4. V, 1038.)

„Ordinieren ſoll heißen und ſein berufen und befehlen das Pfarramt, welches Macht hat und muß haben Chriſtus und ſeine Kirche ohne allen Chreſem und Platten, wo ſie in der Welt iſt, ſowohl als ſie das Wort, Taufe, Sakrament, Geiſt und Glauben haben muß." (Von der Winkelmeſſe und Pfaffenweihe. XIX, 1268.)

„Alle die, ſo im Pfarramt oder Dienſt des Worts funden werden, ſind in einem heiligen, rechten, guten, Gott angenehmen Orden und Stand, als die da predigen, Sakrament reichen, dem gemeinen Kaſten vorſtehen, Küſter und Boten oder Knechte, ſo ſolchen Perſonen dienen uſw." (Luthers Bekenntnis vom Abendmahl Chriſti. XX, 1098.)

„So nun das Amt des Wortes einem verliehen wird, ſo werden ihm auch verliehen alle Ämter, die durch das Wort in der Kirche werden ausgerichtet, das iſt, die Gewalt zu taufen, zu ſegnen, zu binden und zu löſen, zu beten und zu richten oder urteilen. Denn das Amt, zu predigen das Evangelium, iſt das höchſte unter allen; denn es iſt das rechte apoſtoliſche Amt, das den Grund legt allen andern Ämtern, welchen allen zugehört, auf das erſte zu bauen, als da ſind die Ämter der Lehrer, der Propheten, der Regierer, derer, ſo die Gabe der Sprachen und geſund zu machen haben, wie ſie denn Paulus nacheinander ordnet, 1 Kor. 12, 8 f." (Wie man Kirchendiener wählen und einſetzen ſoll. X, 1592.) P. E. Kretzmann

Predigtentwürfe für die Evangelien der Thomasius-Perikopenreihe

Trinitatisfest

Matth. 28, 18—20

Wir schließen unsere Gottesdienste gewöhnlich mit einer Doxologie, einem Lobpreis des dreieinigen Gottes; das setzt gleichsam dem ganzen Gottesdienst die Krone auf. So schließen wir die festliche Hälfte des Kirchenjahrs mit dem Fest der heiligen Dreieinigkeit. — Doch wird das Fest wenig gefeiert, 1. weil man heutzutage sich wenig mit Lehre, vor allem mit Geheimnissen befassen will; der Nachdruck liegt auf Leben, Werken; 2. weil man es in unserer oberflächlichen Zeit für genügend hält, „daß man an Gott glaubt". — Doch: Athanasianisches Glaubensbekenntnis, § 3. 40. So feiern wir ebenso fröhlich Trinitatis wie alle andern Feste, trotzdem, ja gerade weil wir bekennen müssen: Jes. 45, 15.

Unser Gott ist ein wunderbarer Gott

1. in seinem Wesen 2. in seinem Wirken

1

Jeder Mensch weiß, daß es einen Gott gibt; das bezeugt ihm sein Gewissen, Röm. 2, 15, und die Natur, Röm. 1, 19. 20, so daß die Heiden der mächtigste natürliche Beweis für das Dasein eines Gottes sind, zugleich aber der schlagendste Beweis dafür, daß die natürliche Erkenntnis Gottes nicht ausreicht; denn kein Heide hat es je zur Erkenntnis des wahren Gottes gebracht; die Griechen sind dabei nicht weiter gekommen als die Indianer. Diese Erkenntnis kommt nur aus göttlicher Offenbarung.

Nach dieser Offenbarung ist Gott dreieinig. (Nicht das Wort, wohl aber die Lehre im Text.) JEsus nennt die drei Personen; auch werden sie unterschieden, Joh. 14. 16. 17; 15, 26; Eph. 1, 17; Offenbarung bei Christi Taufe. Alle drei gleich Gott; sonst würde die göttliche Ehre des Taufens in seinem Namen neben Gott noch zwei andern gegeben, und das leidet Gott nicht, Jes. 42, 8. Nur der Reihenfolge wegen erste, zweite, dritte Person. (Ath. Bek.) Doch sollen wir taufen in dem Namen des einen Gottes, von dem die ganze Schrift zeugt, 5 Mos. 6, 4; Jes. 43, 10. 11; Matth. 19, 17; 1 Kor. 8, 4; 12, 6; Eph. 4, 6; 1 Tim. 2, 5. — Es ist klare Lehre der Heiligen Schrift, daß Gott einig im Wesen, dreifach in Personen ist.

Das verstehst du nicht? Ich auch nicht. Das ist ein Geheimnis und ist als Geheimnis geoffenbart. Dabei lassen wir es bewenden und machen keine Erklärungsversuche, die doch nicht erklären können; und sollte es jemand stören, daß unsere Vernunft, die tausenderlei im Irdi-

schen nicht verstehen kann, nicht in das Geheimnis eindringen kann? So redet Gott von sich selber; und wer einen andern als den einigen Gott anbetet, treibt Abgötterei; und wer nicht jeder der drei Personen gleiche göttliche Ehre erweist, treibt Abgötterei.

2

Ebenso wunderbar ist der dreieinige Gott in seinem Wirken. Das gilt von allen Werken Gottes: Schöpfung, Erhaltung usw. Der Text redet nur von den Heilstaten Gottes, und so beschränken wir uns darauf.

JEsus befiehlt, wir sollen alle Menschen zu Jüngern, zu Christen, machen durch Taufe und Predigt des Evangeliums. Das könnte gar nicht geschehen, wenn nicht die vollkommene Erfüllung des Heilsrats Gottes zu unserer Erlösung vorausgegangen wäre. Gott hat in seiner Liebe in der Ewigkeit beschlossen, die in Sünde gefallenen Menschen selig zu machen, trotzdem er sie nach seiner Gerechtigkeit mit Tod und Verdammnis hätte strafen müssen. In seiner Weisheit hat er dann einen Weg gefunden, wie dies geschehen konnte, indem er nämlich die Sünden aller Menschen an seinem Sohn strafte. Diese vollendete Erlösung teilt er den Menschen nun durch die Gnadenmittel mit. Und weil die Menschen tot sind und nicht einmal annehmen können, was ihnen angeboten wird, so wirkt der Heilige Geist mit seiner Allmacht durch die Gnadenmittel ein neues Leben in ihnen.

Nicht nur das; nun gibt er seinen Christen den Auftrag, diese himmlischen Güter, die er ihnen gegeben hat, auch andern Menschen mitzuteilen, indem sie die Gnadenmittel in die Welt hinaustragen; und wenn sie das tun, will er, der Allmächtige, V. 18, mit ihnen gehen, V. 20, und ihre Arbeit wirksam und erfolgreich machen.

Ein Wunder nach dem andern! Und ein Geheimnis nach dem andern! Wer kann es verstehen, daß die Taufe „wirket Vergebung" usw.; daß die „törichte Predigt" des Evangeliums die Kraft Gottes ist, selig zu machen alle, die daran glauben? Aber stoßen sollten wir uns nicht daran, daß der wunderbare und geheimnisvolle Gott nun auch durch wunderbare und geheimnisvolle Mittel wirkt.

Ein Christ beginnt seinen Lebenslauf im Namen des dreieinigen Gottes, wenn er getauft wird; und wenn sein Leib in das letzte irdische Ruhebett gelegt wird, ist es wieder der Name des dreieinigen Gottes, der ihn in Gottes Acker einsegnet. So sind wir zeitlebens und auch im Tode in guten Händen.

Wir beten: Lied 149, 12. Theo. Hoyer

Erster Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Mark. 4, 26—29

Am Pfingstfest hörten wir von dem lebendigen Wasser des Evangeliums, das uns tränkt und erquickt und von dem dann Ströme lebendigen Wassers fließen. Am Trinitatisfest wurde uns ans Herz gelegt, daß wir nicht müde werden sollen, dies Evangelium und seine seligen Geheimnisse der Welt zu verkündigen. Heute hören wir von dem Erfolg unserer Bemühungen.

Wie steht es mit unserm Erfolg in der Aussaat des Wortes Gottes?

1. Um Erfolg zu haben, müssen wir das Wort säen
2. Gott allein gibt Wachstum und Gedeihen
3. Zu seiner Zeit werden wir auch ernten

1

V. 26. Der Same im Reich Gottes ist das Wort Gottes. Soll die Erde nicht Unkraut hervorbringen, so muß guter Same gesät werden. Dornensamen entspringen keine Trauben, Distelsamen keine Feigen. Ebensowenig entstehen Früchte, die im Reich Gottes taugen, aus dem Samen menschlicher Irrtümer, aus Gesetztreiberei usw. Wir haben Gottes Wort in reicher Fülle. Was nützt das aber, wenn dieser Same nicht gesät wird? In einer Pyramide wurden lebendige Samenkörner gefunden, Tausende von Jahren alt, die nie Frucht gebracht hatten, weil sie nie ausgesät worden waren. Wie die Erde keine Frucht hervorbringt, wo kein Same ist, so bleibt auch der Same fruchtlos, wenn er nicht in die Erde gesät wird, Röm. 10, 14. Gott hat uns zu seinen Säeleuten bestimmt, Matth. 28, 19. 20. Während natürlicher Same nur einmal gesät wird, soll der Same des Evangeliums immer wieder in die Herzen der Menschen gesät werden. Gelegenheit dazu ist reichlich vorhanden: Eltern im Hause, Lehrer in der Schule, Pastoren im Gottesdienst, im Konfirmandenunterricht, in der Seelsorge, jeder Christ im Umgang mit Bekannten und Verwandten, Christen und Unchristen, 2 Tim. 4, 2; Luk. 12, 42; 5 Mos. 6, 6—9. So hat sich das Reich Gottes, so soll es sich haben. Wir sollen das Wort Gottes aussäen.

2

V. 27. 28. Während wir beim Säen Gottes Mitarbeiter sind, ist der Erfolg nicht von unserm Tun abhängig, sondern Gott allein schenkt Wachstum und Gedeihen. So ist es beim Säen des natürlichen Samens. Daher sorgt sich auch der Landmann nicht darüber, sondern schläft und geht anderer Arbeit nach. Dennoch wächst die Saat von selbst durch Gottes Wundermacht. Des Landmanns Sorgen würde auch nicht einen Halm hervorbringen oder sein Wachstum beschleunigen. Das

gilt auch von dem geistlichen Säen. Wir haben Samen, der göttliche Lebenskraft in sich trägt, Joh. 6, 63; Hebr. 4, 12, der ohne unser Zutun geistliches Leben hervorruft. Wir taufen ein Kind. „Das Wort Gottes, so mit und bei dem Wasser ist", macht es zu einem Wasser des Lebens, Tit. 3, 5, ohne daß wir wissen, wie das zugeht, Joh. 3, 9. So entsteht und wächst das geistliche Leben, erst das Gras, dann die Ähren usw. Langsam und allmählich sproßt und wächst das Wort in den Herzen unserer Kinder im Heim, in der Schule, im Unterricht, in denen der Erwachsenen im Gottesdienst, in der Seelsorge usw. So nimmt die Gemeinde zu und wächst im Glauben, in der Liebe, in der Erkenntnis, Eph. 4, 12—16. Wie sollten wir uns freuen über jedes Wachstum, auch wenn es nicht so schnell geht, wie wir wünschen! Lernen wir jeden, auch den geringsten, Erfolg der Gnade Gottes zuschreiben. Das wird Verzagtheit vertreiben. Und hüten wir uns, das junge Grün in den Boden zu stampfen, zu hadern und zu schimpfen, bloß weil der ausgesäte Same morgen noch nicht Frucht trägt. JEsu Beispiel, Matth. 19, 28; Luk. 22, 28—30. Wie freut sich Paulus immer wieder über jedes Wachstum!

3

V. 29. Auch wir sollen ernten zu Gottes Zeit. Das Kind, das bald nach der Taufe stirbt, hat Frucht gebracht, wie sie ein kleines Gräslein bringen kann. Es hat die Herzen der Eltern erfreut, mit Dank erfüllt. Seine Krankheit hat sie ins Gebet getrieben, sein Tod sie angehalten, ihre Herzen nach oben zu schicken, Kol. 3, 2; vgl. Ps. 8, 3. Welch herrliche Ernte unserer Aussaat! So sammeln Eltern, Lehrer, Pastoren, alle Christen reiche Ernten ein, die Gott ihnen als Lohn ihrer treuen Arbeit schenkt. Nicht immer sieht der Sämann die volle Frucht. Mancher Vater, manche Mutter, mancher Pastor, mancher Christ ist dahingestorben, ohne den erwünschten Erfolg zu erleben. Aber sie alle werden droben ernten, was sie hier gesät haben, Ps. 126, 5. 6. Hier gilt eben Joh. 4, 36—38.

Darum sich nicht erheben, aber auch nicht mißmutig werden, sondern in aller Geduld den Samen weiter ausstreuen und Gott bitten, daß er ihn wachsen und gedeihen lasse, reiche Ernten beschere. Th. Lätsch

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Zweiter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 9, 9—13

Die Wunder JEsu beweisen, daß er Macht hat, Sünde zu vergeben, V. 1—8. Das Volk aber fürchtete sich (Sündenerkenntnis — Glaube) und pries Gott, der in JEsu den Menschen eine Sünden vergebende Macht verliehen hat. JEsus vergibt Sünde durch Menschen, aber es ist seine Vergebung, Luk. 10, 16. So heilt er die Sünder.

JEsus der barmherzige Heiland aller bußfertigen Sünder

1. Er vergibt ihnen ihre Sünden
2. Er gewinnt ihr Herz

1

V. 9. Warum hat JEsus den als Zöllner berüchtigten Matthäus zu seinem Apostel berufen? Nicht weil dieser Geld hatte, sondern weil er ein bußfertiger Sünder war, V. 12. 14; Ps. 51, 19. Indem er ihn aufforderte „Folge mir nach!" sprach er ihm zugleich die Absolution.

Auch die andern armen Sünder und Zöllner in Kapernaum und Umgegend hat JEsus absolviert. Durch die Berufung des Matthäus hat er ihnen eine evangelische Tatpredigt gehalten, ihnen ein Exempel seiner Gnade und Barmherzigkeit gegeben, 1 Tim. 1, 16. Sie haben daraus den rechten Schluß gezogen, V. 10.

JEsus hatte den armen Sündern seine Gnade gewährt. Die Pharisäer wollten ihnen den Trost dieser Gnade aus dem Herzen stehlen, V. 11. Ein niederschmetterndes Wort für die zarten Gewissen. Aller Mut wollte ihnen entfallen, alle Glaubensfreude ersterben.

Aber: V. 12. 13. JEsus leuchtet den falschen Heiligen heim. Er rügt die Selbstgerechtigkeit, wodurch sie sich selber von seiner Kur ausschlossen, die Unbarmherzigkeit, die ihren Eigenruhm Lügen strafte. JEsus beschützt die armen Sünder im Besitz seiner Gnade.

Welch ein Trost für alle armen Sünder! Sie sind niedergeschlagen, schweben wohl gar am Rand der Verzweiflung, sind todkrank; aber JEsus rettet sie, richtet sie auf, macht sie gesund, indem er ihnen ihre Sünden vergibt. Vgl. gesunde Lehre, 1 Tim. 6, 3; 2 Tim. 1, 13; gesund im Glauben, Tit. 1, 13; 2, 2; 2 Joh. 2; Ps. 51, 10. Lied 5, 2.

2

Eine gefährliche Lehre? Das sagen die Feinde des Evangeliums. Tatsächlich ist die Gnade JEsu eine Gotteskraft zur Heiligung, gewinnt die Herzen der bußfertigen Sünder.

Der betrübte Matthäus freut sich, daß Gottes Sohn ihn zu sich ruft. Er ist so dankbar, daß er sofort aufstehen, sein einträgliches Geldgeschäft verlassen und JEsu nachfolgen kann.

Ferner Missionssinn. Er sucht die zusammenzubringen, die zusammengehören, den Heiland und die geängsteten Sünder. Gastmahl, V. 10. Eine wirksame Missionsmethode. Viele kamen. Was zog sie dorthin? „Das lebendige Brot, vom Himmel kommen." JEsus, der Sünden vergibt, war der Magnet.

Die armen Sünder, die die Gnade JEsu suchen und schätzen, haben ein Herz für Mission, bekennen den Heiland, unterstützen das Werk der Gemeinde und der Synode, lassen es sich ebenso wie Matthäus gern etwas kosten, geben fröhlich, reichlich.

JEsus ist es, der auch heute die betrübten Sünder in die Kirche zieht, zum Tisch des HErrn, zu Wort und Sakrament. Wo der barmherzige Heiland der Sünder gepredigt wird, da kommen wohl nicht die Satten, aber die Gnadenhungrigen. Selbst ein ärmlicher Raum wird ihnen zum Heiligtum, die schlichteste Kirche zur Kathedrale, ja zur Pforte des Himmels. Die Absolution wirkt den Glauben; der Glaube wirkt die Liebe, richtet das Gesetz auf.

Hingegen die Werkheiligen tun eitel „tote" Werke, Hebr. 9, 14. Sie wollen den armen Sündern nicht geholfen, sondern sie gänzlich verstoßen sehen. Keine Liebe, keine Barmherzigkeit, keine Kenntnis der Anfangsgründe des Gesetzes. Warum sagt JEsus ihnen dies? Nicht weil er sie haßt, sondern „Sünder", „Kranke", aus ihnen machen will, um sie dann mit seiner rechten Arznei, dem Evangelium, gesund zu machen.

Erkenne jeder sein Sündenelend, aber auch den HErrn, den Arzt, und spreche: „Gott Lob, auch mich nimmt JEsus an!" Lied 242, 11.

Paul G. Birkmann

Dritter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 5, 1—6

Wer wie Luther und unsere Kirche die goldene Schriftlehre von der Rechtfertigung des Sünders aus Gnaden, um Christi willen, führt, wird von den falschen Kirchen und den Weltkindern loser Morallehre beschuldigt. Das ist eine falsche Anklage. Nicht nur lehren wir gute Werke, sondern wir treiben diese Lehre schriftgemäß. Die Heiligung darf keine Heuchelei sein, sondern muß aus einem Herzen kommen, das an JEsum als den Heiland glaubt. Gott sieht das Herz, die Gesinnung, an.

Die tägliche Heiligung

1. Sie ist Erneurung des Sinnes
2. Sie hat die herrlichsten Verheißungen

1

Geistliche Armut, Trauer über die eigene Sündhaftigkeit, Sanftmut, Hunger und Durst nach Gerechtigkeit, das sind Regungen und Empfindungen des Herzens und charakterisieren den Sinn des Bekehrten. (Syn.-Kat., Fr. 179.) Geistliche Armut: Das bittere Gefühl des selbstverschuldeten Mangels an geistlichen und himmlischen Gütern einschließlich der Sehnsucht nach Befriedigung des Bedürfnisses in JEsu allein. Diese fehlte in dem Offenb. 3, 17 angeführten Fall und tritt leuchtend hervor Ps. 73, 25. 26; 119, 20. 123. Je näher man Christo steht, desto mehr fühlt man diese Armut, und desto mehr verlangt man nach seinem Reichtum. Der Zöllner im Tempel war geistlich arm. Bist du? —

Trauer: Die Niedergeschlagenheit, die Gott gefällt, V. 44; 2 Kor. 7, 10; Pred. 7, 4, die auf die Erkenntnis der Sünde folgt und in solcher Erkenntnis alles Leiden mit der Sünde verbindet und dagegen Trost bei JEsu sucht, wie auch die Traurigkeit in allem Leid, das der Teufel und die Welt den Nachfolgern Christi antut. Beispiele: Petrus, David, der Zöllner in ihrer Buße; Ps. 126. Bist du so traurig? — Sanftmut: Von Natur sind wir störrig, unbändig, wild; die neue Kreatur aber ist gelinde, beugsam, Matth. 11, 29, und übt diese Eigenschaft an den Mitmenschen, Kol. 3, 12. 13; Tit. 3, 2; Frucht des Geistes, Gal. 5, 22. Abraham war sanftmütig, Gen. 13, 8. Bist du? — Hunger und Durst: Beruht darauf, daß der Glaube, um bestehen zu können, täglich geistliche Nahrung und Trank fordert. Dieser fehlte bei den Juden zu Amos' Zeit, Amos 8, 11, und bei den Pharisäern, V. 20. Er schließt in sich die Erkenntnis der eigenen Ungerechtigkeit vor Gott und Menschen. Paulus, Phil. 3, 9; der Psalmist, Ps. 42, 3; David, Ps. 63, 2. 3; die Jünger im Text. Hast du einen solchen Hunger und Durst? Die tägliche Heiligung besteht einerseits in der Entsagung alles sündlichen Wesens, andererseits in der Übung in der gottgefälligen Gesinnung des Herzens, der dann die Werke folgen, Röm. 12, 2.

Sie ist nötig. JEsus offenbart sie hier als den Willen Gottes. Vgl. 1 Thess. 4, 3; 1 Petr. 1, 14. 15. Sie ist schon in beiden Tafeln des Gesetzes vorgeschrieben. Wer eine andere Herzensgesinnung hat als die, welche JEsus hier lehrt, der ist kein Christ und verscherzt seine Seligkeit. Aber JEsus zwingt nicht zur Heiligung wie das Gesetz, sondern lockt und reizt mit göttlichen Verheißungen. Ihre Quelle ist einzig und allein JEsus und sein Evangelium, V. 2. 17. 20. 33; Gal. 3. Wir sind Gott angenehm nur in dem Geliebten. Das Gesetz leistet hierbei dem Evangelium Dienst. Wo keine Erkenntnis der Sünde, da kein Glaube an Christum und da keine Heiligung, sondern nur Werkheiligkeit. „Damit wäre die Quelle der Heiligung und der guten Werke verstopft." (Pieper, Dgm. III, 20. F. C.; *Triglotta*, S. 964, §11; 966, § 20.)

2

Das Himmelreich wird den geistlich Armen zugesprochen. Siehe auch V. 20. Ihnen wird Ehre darin verheißen, V. 19. Der unschätzbare geistliche Reichtum: die Güter des Heils im Gnadenreich und die Vollkommenheit im Ehrenreich. Die Armen sind reich, jetzt schon im vollen Besitz und kommen dort in den vollen Genuß des Himmelreichs. Beispiele: die große Sünderin; Cornelius. Den Traurigen wird Trost gespendet hier und dort, Jes. 38, 17; 2 Kor. 1, 3—5; Offenb. 7, 17. Denkt an den armen Lazarus. Der Besitz des Erdreichs ist den Sanftmütigen verheißen, Ps. 37, 11; 119, 165. Die Sanftmut der Christen vermag in dieser Welt mehr als das zornige Treiben der Weltkinder. Gott gibt den Sanftmütigen ihr bescheiden Teil hier auf Erden und im Lande der Lebendigen ihr Erbteil, Ps. 142, 6. Siehe die Kirchen-

geschichte von der Apostel Zeit an. JEsus entwirft mit seiner Verheißung kein Traumbild des Chiliasmus. Sattheit im guten Sinn, hier: Jes. 55, 1; Matth. 11, 28; Jer. 31, 25; dort: Offenb. 7, 16. 17a. Schon in diesem Leben werden der Heiligen Bedürfnisse befriedigt werden, und jenseits werden die Erneuerten die reichste Stillung erhalten. Siehe die Sachsen, Bayern und Wenden vor hundert Jahren.

Diese Segnungen werden den Gläubigen zuteil. JEsus gratuliert ihnen gleichsam, wie Ps. 1 („Wohl dem!") und Ps. 119 („Wohl denen!"). Welch glückliche Menschen sie sind, die Gesegneten des Vaters! Ihnen ist wohl nach Leib und Seele, in Zeit und Ewigkeit. Lied 324, 4b. Die Weltkinder haben keinen Teil an dieser Glückseligkeit, und die Werkheiligen können im Lichte dieser Lehre Christi nicht bestehen, obwohl sie gerade dieses Wort Christi so stark betonen. Der natürliche Mensch sucht eben sein vermeintliches Glück im irdischen Wohlsein, Ps. 73, verschönert die Sünde, besonders die Heuchelei, scheut aus Selbstsucht die geistliche Armut, Trauer, Sanftmut, Hunger und Durst nach der Gerechtigkeit und verscherzt also sein Glück in diesem und seine Seligkeit in jenem Leben. Dagegen: 1 Tim. 4, 8. Und JEsus zeigt im Text, daß es ein seliger Gewinn ist, ein wahrer Christ zu sein.

Schluß. Die Heiligung ist in diesem Leben unvollkommen, aber sie ist dennoch Heiligung. Der Christ muß stets darin wachsen, darin immer völliger werden, 1 Thess. 4, 1; 5, 23; 2 Kor. 7, 1, und die Seligpreisungen der Bergpredigt Christi inwendig und auswendig lernen, wissen und üben. G. H. Smukal

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

über das übereinkommen zwischen den A. L. C.- und U. L. C.-Kommissionen schreibt die „Kirchl. Zeitschrift" (Aprilheft): „Unter der Führung von D. Knubel, der in all den Verhandlungen der Wortführer eines konservativen Luthertums gewesen war, bekannte sich die Kommission der Ver. Luth. Kirche zur uneingeschränkten Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift. Die Vorlage unserer Kommission hatte in bezug auf diesen Punkt gelautet: Die Schrift ist 'one organic whole without contradiction and error (John 10:35),' die der Ver. Luth. Kirche: Die Schrift ist 'a complete, perfect, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the center (John 10:35).' Davon ließ die Kommission 'perfect' fallen und ersetzte es durch *'errorless.'* Damit konnte sich die Kommission der A. L.-Kirche zufrieden geben, denn 'errorless' war eine wörtliche Wiedergabe des 'without error' und das 'unbreakable' deckte sich sachlich mit 'without contradiction,' wie diese Gleichung oder Identität auch ausdrücklich ausgesprochen wurde. . . .

„Diese Erklärung in bezug auf die Schrift geht in zwei Punkten über die Baltimorer ***Declaration*** vom Oktober 1938 hinaus, indem sie 1. die recht verstandene (nicht mechanische) Verbalinspiration ausdrücklich ausspricht und indem sie 2. die Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift nicht mehr einengt auf die Abschnitte, die sich auf das Heil beziehen. Dieser Unterschied und Fortschritt wurde auch ausdrücklich zugegeben. Es bleibt nun abzuwarten, welche Stellung die beiden Kirchenkörper zu diesen von den Kommissionen angenommenen Sätzen einnehmen werden und ob die Sätze, wenn angenommen, auch im Leben der Kirche durchgeführt werden; denn wohl ist es ein Großes, eine Wahrheit zu erkennen und anzuerkennen; schwerer aber ist es, aber doch auch notwendig, im kirchlichen Handeln mit ihr ernst zu machen. Ohne Lehrdisziplin kann keine Kirche auf die Dauer gesund bleiben. Wir befehlen die ganze Weiterentwicklung der Gnade und Wahrheit Gottes. — M. R." A.

An Expression of the "Lutheran Companion" on the Question of Lutheran Union. — In an editorial appearing in the *Lutheran Companion* (Augustana Synod) of March 30 we read as follows: "The editor of the *Christian Century*, in commenting on the recent moves toward unity among Lutherans of America, makes some curious observations. He says: 'While these and all other approaches to unity are hailed with satisfaction by friendly observers in all denominations, the fact cannot be overlooked that, in building a solid theological platform for their own unity, and especially one of the extremely conservative character indicated by this recently adopted verbal-inspiration plank, the Lutherans are rendering more remote their union with non-Lutheran bodies and are imposing difficulties in the way even of cooperation with them.'

"The allusion to a 'verbal-inspiration plank' is a reference to the recent agreement between commissions of the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church in America on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures. The formula adopted reads: 'By virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Spirit, by which he supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, the books of the Bible are related

to one another and, taken together, constitute a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the center.'

"In regard to the comments of the editor of the *Christian Century* it might be observed, first of all, that, although many Lutherans in America would gladly cooperate with non-Lutheran bodies in efforts where they believe the kingdom of God can be advanced, there are no Lutheran groups, so far as we know, that are even contemplating 'union with non-Lutheran bodies.' Furthermore, if the building of 'a solid theological platform' of a 'conservative character' is to be regarded as an obstacle in the way of unity between the various branches of the Christian Church, it may as well be stated right now that the fears of the *Christian Century* editor that unity between Lutherans and other Protestants is unlikely are well founded. A 'unity' in which revealed truth is to be sacrificed for the sake of external agreement is no unity at all and is indeed a remote prospect so far as Lutherans are concerned. It is the more to be regretted that there are some leaders in the Protestant Church who seem to feel that it is no great concern what the Word of God has to say in regard to our Christian faith. Herein, in the final analysis, may be found the real reason for our sad disunity.

"So far as unity among Lutherans is concerned, it is just because of doctrinal agreement that final union may be regarded as virtually inevitable. And we may truly rejoice over this. When the day comes, by God's own gracious direction, that the Lutheran Church in America shall become one, it is of supreme importance that the external union be founded on inner unity, in order that the Church of the open Bible may bear mighty witness to all the world of the spirtual truth which has been committed to her and which she believes and confesses.

"We believe that this inner unity among Lutheran church-bodies in America already exists. It only remains to have it revealed. How is this to be done?

"We are not altogether sure that the 'technique,' or procedure, now being pursued in order to demonstrate the existence of spiritual unity in the Lutheran Church is the correct one. It suggests from the outset that some Lutheran bodies are suspicious of the 'orthodoxy' of other groups. It even affords opportunity for one or more groups to assume the arbitrary position of being the final judges of what constitutes real Lutheranism.

"To permit the Lutheran unity movement to gravitate into a discussion of a few specific doctrines of the Church also has its dangers. It opens the door for the introduction of new issues, as has already happened during the negotiations between two groups. All this merely impedes the progress toward the desired goal, since the number of doctrinal questions that might be raised is almost interminable. It also may result in making Lutheran unity contingent upon the acceptance of definite, individualistic interpretations of certan doctrines in which the Church has not made a final pronouncement or has permitted considerable latitude of opinion. Unless it is the purpose of American Lutheranism to rewrite the Book of Concord, the wisdom and value of such procedure may indeed be questioned.

"How, then, shall we proceed? It is obvious that the purposes of unity among American Lutherans can be promoted most logically on the basis of the official doctrinal declarations of the various groups. Each church-body has incorporated its doctrinal standards in its constitution; it has written the same standards into the constitution which it has given to its congregations, and it requires the candidates whom it ordains to the ministry to subscribe to these doctrinal statements.

"If we are satisfied that adherence to the historic confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church is sufficient to entitle a group to be called 'Lutheran,' why should it be necessary to proceed any farther than to determine whether or not that group has officially adopted these symbols?

"Never has the time seemed more propitious for the Lutherans of America to get together on a basis of mutual understanding than it is right now. It would be more than tragic if doors that are now open should be closed again through unfortunate and unnecessary quibbling. In the words of a noted Lutheran divine, 'God have mercy on the Lutheran Church of America, lest she miss the day of her destiny!'"

There are good and heartening things said in this editorial. Besides, there is submitted here the editorial expression of the *Christian Century* on the subject of Lutheran union, which we should like to bring to the attention of our readers. In surveying, however, the views of the *Lutheran Companion* on the establishment of union between Lutherans, we fail to see how thorough doctrinal discussion among Lutheran bodies, culminating in joint statements concerning controverted points, can afford "an opportunity for one or more groups to assume the arbitrary position of being the final judges of what constitutes real Lutheranism." Every group, in the last analysis, will have to pass judgment as to the Lutheranism of the body with which it proposes or is asked to unite. It will have to decide whether this Lutheranism is sufficient for union or not. If a Lutheran church-body votes for union with another Lutheran body solely because of the latter's formal acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions, it makes the establishment of church-fellowship a rather mechanical matter, but it nevertheless constitutes itself a judge of what must be regarded as Lutheranism. Presumably it would vote against union with a body which has the Lutheran name, but does not avow allegiance to the Lutheran Confessions.

That in discussions intended to bring about unity new issues will arise is inevitable if one of the negotiating parties deviates from the Confessions while the other does not. In such cases, it is not only profitable but absolutely necessary that the point of difference be carefully examined and that the error which is sponsored by one group be recognized as what it is. That is not "an impeding of progress" but a direct contribution to advancing the cause of true unity. Furthermore, the fact that the Church has not "made a final pronouncement" on certain points of doctrine cannot enter into these discussions as a deciding factor. What must be considered in every case is whether the respective teaching, be it old or new, is Scriptural or not.

It may be that "never has the time seemed more propitious for the Lutherans of America to get together on a basis of mutual under-

standing than it is right now." But let us not forget that, if this basis of mutual understanding should rest on indifference rather than on unity in doctrine, the resulting fellowship would do far more harm than good and would provoke our God to pronounce on the negotiating parties the verdict uttered against the church at Laodicea, Rev. 3:15 f.

A.

The Freedom of the Will. — The *Lutheran Church Quarterly,* theological organ of the U. L. C. A., in its January issue offers among a number of other readable articles also one on the "Freedom of the Will," written by W. C. Waltemyer, professor of the English Bible in Gettysburg College and Holman lecturer on the Augsburg Confession in 1938. We congratulate the *Quarterly* on its discussion of the subject from the viewpoint of our Confessions. If there is anything (outside the Bible) at this time, when the Lutheran synods in our country are talking church union, that deserves thorough discussion, it is the *corpus doctrinae* contained in our venerable *Concordia.* If the Lutheran synods could be persuaded to accept this *corpus doctrinae* in one and the same sense, no further brief or long statements would be required to effect a sound and solid union. The question only is whether we really understand our Confessions *in eadem sententia.* There is a tendency today to recast the ancient formulas of our Christian faith in new molds, taken over from modern psychology and philosophy. There may be some advantage in this use of a new theological terminology; for since theological parlance is predominantly man-made, there is *per se* no reason why it should not be modern, just as our church architecture today is modern and our garments are modern. Still, whenever we employ new expressions, we are apt to be misunderstood, and besides, the new terms are commonly unintelligible to our laity, most of whom are not psychologically or philosophically trained. Dr. Waltemyer employs Article XVIII of the A. C. very ingeniously against modern opponents and perverters of the ancient categories of human freedom. In the incandescent light of Art. XVIII of the A. C. he views and condemns behaviorism, humanism and theistic naturalism as superficial and inadequate, and shows that Article XVIII of the A. C. still supplies us with a safe and workable canon for our theological thinking and action. He broadly divides the contents of Article XVIII of the A. C. into three parts: 1. Our fathers believed in the *fact* of free will. "Man's will hath some liberty" (*libertas minor*). 2. They declared there were definite limitations in the exercise of man's freedom. "It hath no power to work the righteousness of God, or a spiritual righteousness." 3. For the highest spiritual endeavor they felt the inadequacy of any dynamic other than that which is of God. "This spiritual righteousness is wrought in the heart when men do receive the Spirit of God through the Word." God *alone* enables one to possess *libertas maior.* God gives us this highest kind of freedom. So far so good. But the article contains a number of explanatory statements which we fail to understand, as, for example: "It is with difficulty (*if at all possible*) that one realizes the *libertas maior,* that freedom which is our final liberty in truth and goodness." What do these words mean? If they refer to the *libertas spiritualis,* by which a person truly repents of

his sin and believes in Christ as his Savior, then that liberty is utterly impossible to natural man. Again, we read: "God gives us this highest kind of freedom," *i. e.*, the *libertas maior*. That of course is true; but God gives us also *every* kind of freedom, for *He has created* us free and responsible beings. The statement needs additional qualification. Moreover, we read: "Conflict in thought is to be preferred to self-satisfied assurance or indifference." We ask: Is that true? Self-satisfied assurance or indifference is, of course, a most vicious evil, but is spiritual conflict in thought anything good *per se*? Luther certainly did not find it so in his pre-Gospel days. Furthermore, the writer, quoting an authority, says: "There is nothing so dead as an accepted creed." Again, we ask: Is that true? The Apostles' Creed is to us personally a most vital, living, effective thing, which moves us, thrills us, energizes us, whenever we pray it, although it has been accepted centuries ago as a declaration of divine truth. And that is true of all our confessions, especially the A. C. Or, again, quoting another person, he declares: "A philosophy that is done, is a philosophy that is done for." That may be true of a philosophy, but it is not true of our Christian faith. Our A. C., for instance, is not "done for" just because it is "done." We do not write all this in the spirit of carping criticism but rather by way of appending a few notes of inquiry to what we have read. Perhaps the following may help to clarify the issue. Our confessions (taken together) concede to natural man freedom 1. in all matters of this earthly life; 2. in the matter of *iustitia civilis;* and 3. in the sense that in these matters man is a free agent, and therefore not under coercion. But they deny to him any and all freedom in *spiritual matters,* so that he cannot of his own power truly repent of his sins and truly believe in Christ Jesus as his Lord and Savior. If we adhere to these simple Scriptural statements, we shall not only understand one another but also explain more adequately the true facts of human psychology against all anti-Biblical trends, such as behaviorism and humanism, which the learned author rightly rejects both as opposing reason and divine revelation. It is certainly well for all Lutherans to meet on the common ground of our glorious Confessions and thus to be "perfectly joined in the same mind and in the same judgment," 1 Cor. 1:10. J. T. M.

"Scripture Contains the Word of God." — The January number of the *C. T. M.* (p. 69), discussing the proposed union of the Presbyterian and the Protestant Episcopal churches, said: "Paragraph 1 of the Proposed Statement on Reunion states: 'The conferring churches find themselves agreed in their acceptance of the Old and New Testaments as containing the Word of God and furnishing the supreme standard of faith and morals.' The commissioners felt that the statement of the [original] Resolution ["The two churches, . . . recognizing the *Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith,* . . . hereby formally declare their purpose to achieve organic unity between the respective churches"] needed to be amplified. But saying that the Scriptures '*contain* the Word of God' does not help matters. The conservative Presbyterians will not stand on such a platform. And there will be so many liberals rushing to stand on such a platform that it will break." The *Presbyterian Guardian,* in the Feb-

ruary number, thus voices the refusal of the conservative Presbyterians to stand on such a platform: "In declaring that the churches 'find themselves agreed in their acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing the Word of God and furnishing the supreme standard of faith and morals,' the Proposed Statements on Reunion might appear to give the impression that the authority of the Scriptures is maintained in accordance with the historic Reformed position. But that is far from being the case. This is an essentially different doctrine from that of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which affirms that Holy Scripture '*is* the Word of God.' This statement demands much less than does the formula of subscription for the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., for the latter requires recognition of the Scriptures as 'the Word of God, the *only infallible* rule of faith and practise.' . . . By the most solemn vows Presbyterian ministers affirm their acceptance of the Scriptures as the Word of God, receive and adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, and approve of the government of the Church, even as our President and other public officers swear to uphold the Constitution. But now, by the steps that have been taken towards union, the representatives of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. seem clearly to imply that these vows are not to be taken seriously, that the Church is to lower its flag of testimony to the Scriptures as the Word of God, abandon its constitution. . . . If the truth is that the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has lost its faith in the Bible as the Word of God and no longer wishes to uphold its constitution, as many of its actions in recent years bear out, the frank and candid action would be to seek constitutional changes after open admission of its rejection of the old standards." E.

An Appraisal of the Missouri Synod's Action Pertaining to the Approach between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod. — In the *Australasian Theological Review* for October-December, 1938 (Vol. IX, No. 4), we find a long article in which Prof. H. Hamann, member of the faculty of the school of our brethren in Adelaide (Unley), South Australia, discusses the chief facts pertaining to the efforts looking to the establishment of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod. The article, having the caption "A Step Toward Lutheran Union in America," is intensely interesting, and we should like to reprint it in its entirety, but on account of its length we have to restrict ourselves to the reproduction of a few paragraphs. Special importance, we think, attaches to what Professor Hamann says on the action of our Synod pertaining to the points in which, according to the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. representatives, some members of the latter church-body do not fully agree with Missouri Synod teaching. We quote:

"An examination of the reservations, if we may use this term, which the *Declaration* makes with respect to certain doctrines, reveals nothing that need arouse apprehension as to a successful continuation of the doctrinal discussions. Thus the *Declaration* holds that it is not false teaching to speak of a visible side of the Church when speaking of its essence, provided that by this term nothing else is meant than the means

of grace. Now, while the means of grace (the Word of God and the Sacraments) are indeed necessarily connected with the Church, they are properly defined as its marks (*notae ecclesiae*), not as its essence. However, it must be conceded that, if no other elements enter in, any objection raised against the statement of the *Declaration* must enter the plea of inexact definition and not that of false doctrine. — As regards the teaching of the Antichrist, it is gratifying indeed to know that the *Declaration* accepts without qualification the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions 'that the Pope is the very Antichrist,' though the question whether there will be in the future 'a specific unfolding and personal concentration of the antichristian powers present and thus a still more comprehensive fulfilment of 2 Thess. 2,' is left to God. We feel that this vague reference to the future would profitably have been omitted; on the other hand, we find a certain reassuring significance in the initial capital letter of the word 'Antichrist' and in the absence of such a mark of distinction when the 'antichristian powers' are mentioned. — Finally, in the field of eschatology the *Declaration*, after demolishing in three terse and telling sentences the picture of the last times as usually painted by Chiliasts, asks freedom of teaching for three points, which are held by some though not expressly taught by the American Lutheran Church. They are: the hope of a general conversion of the Jews (chiefly on the basis of Rom. 11:25, 26); the possibility that there may be a physical resurrection of the martyrs before the Last Day, on the strength of Rev. 20:4; and the point that, in the words of Dr. Walther, it is not possible to say with absolute certainty either that the thousand years (Rev. 20) have 'been fulfilled or that they still lie in the future.' We wonder a little why these matters should be insisted on when all millennial implications and associations are so emphatically repudiated. Perhaps some allowance must be made for exegetical judgments that have become habitual. We venture to think that, in the absence of a chiliastic background to which these details can serve as embellishments, insistence upon them will be neither general nor long-continued. They will probably die of inanition.

"With respect to all the doctrinal matters mentioned in the previous paragraph, the *Declaration* states, appealing in most instances to pronouncements made by writers within the Missouri Synod, that the views put forward need not be disruptive of church-fellowship. Committee No. 16 endorsed this opinion, and the convention did the same by unanimously adopting the report of this committee, after the matter had been discussed in four sessions.

"How carefully and conscientiously the Missouri Synod moved in this entire matter may be seen from a number of other resolutions, all of which are contained in the report of Committee No. 16 and all of which hence secured synodical approval by the adoption of that report. Thus the Committee on Lutheran Union was instructed to endeavor to establish *full* agreement on the 'points of non-fundamental doctrines' mentioned in the *Declaration* and to work for 'uniform and Scripturally acceptable terminology and teaching' in regard to the 'visible side of the Church.' Again, it was pointed out that for true unity agreement in practise was

needed as well as doctrinal agreement, particular mention being made of 'the attitude toward the antichristian lodge, anti-Scriptural pulpit- and altar-fellowship, and all other forms of unionism.' Finally, the resolutions state that the establishment of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod will depend on the approval on the part of the other synods with which the bodies named are now in fellowship, of the action so far taken. [The respective paragraphs read: "The establishing of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod will depend also on the establishing on the part of the American Lutheran Church of doctrinal agreement with those church-bodies with which the American Lutheran Church is in fellowship. As far as the Missouri Synod is concerned, this whole matter must be submitted for approval to the other synods constituting the Synodical Conference." Ed.] Yet it may be argued that the Missouri Synod envisaged at least the possibility that this happy consummation may be reached before its next regular convention; for another resolution reads: 'If by the grace of God fellowship can be established, this fact is to be announced officially by the President of Synod. Until then no action is to be taken by any of our pastors or congregations which would overlook the fact that we are not yet united.'" A.

The New Testament Conception of the Church. — Among the representatives attending the recent International Missionary Council meeting at Tambaram (Madras), India, was also the Rev. Dr. Abdel Ross Wentz, professor at the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary of the U. L. C. A. Under the heading given he presented a paper in which he stressed the commonly acknowledged Scriptural *affectiones* of the Church: The Church is 1) Christian; 2) holy; 3) apostolic; 4) catholic, or universal; 5) one. These marks of the Church the Romanists apply to their own external ecclesiastical organization, while their Lutheran opponents rightly relate them to the *ecclesia invisibilis*. *"Ecclesia invisibilis est sancta, una, apostolica, catholica, infallibilis* [*columna veritatis*], *extra quam nulla salus."* (Cf. *e. g., Hutterus Redivivus,* p. 266 f.) Hase quotes Hutter as complaining: *"Quod ad veram ecclesiam pertinet, quod sit columna veritatis quodque non erret, illud ad suam ecclesiam Pontificii vitiose transferunt." (Ibid.)* But the same papistic tendency, to refer that which properly and exclusively belongs to the *ecclesia invisibilis,* we find also in Reformed theology, as also in Calvinizing Lutheran denominations of a unionistic type. In his article Dr. Wentz commits the same mistake, and we direct the attention of our readers to this fact because we find his essay published in a popular Lutheran periodical without any critical comment whatever. But thus to apply to *Christendom in general* what really belongs to the *communio sanctorum* means to present not the New Testament conception of the Church but a downright rationalistic conception (Calvinism, Romanism, Ritschlianism, Modernism), which is bound to cause the greatest confusion.

This confusion is grossly apparent even in the essay of Dr. Wentz. The Madras (Tambaram) International Missionary Council was governed in the main by liberal leaders. Dr. Mott served as its moderator and was again chosen for this office, though he is an outspoken Modernist of

the E. Stanley Jones type. The most popular books at Tambaram were those of Toyohiko Kagawa, whose "Christian outlook" has become almost entirely "socialized." Prof. Hendrik Kraemer's recent work, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World,* written especially for the convention, was much discussed; but while it aims at a conservative attitude, it is nevertheless steeped in the unionism and externalism from which Calvinism commonly suffers. At the conference sixty-three different denominations were represented, including staunch conservatives, middle-of-the-roaders, and declared Liberalists. Such a variegated assembly made up of believers and scoffers, and all of them given blindly to religious unionism, is certainly not the "Church of the living God." And yet Dr. Wentz addressed it as if the external body of so-called Christians represented by these several hundred delegates were *the* Church, which is Christian, holy, apostolic, catholic, one. But we dare not comfort an ecclesiastical church-body which is so inherently rationalistic and unionistic as that convened at Tambaram with the *affectiones* that apply only to the *congregatio sanctorum,* which to us in this life is invisible.

The confusion in the mind of the writer may be shown by a few statements from his essay. He writes: "The Church of the New Testament is catholic because its message is a message of divine revelation and transcends all forms of religion and religiosity. Christianity is not a religion. Religion is man's effort to adjust himself to the ultimates. Christianity is God's answer to the quest of the human heart. Jesus Christ is not the founder of a religion. The message of the New Testament Church is not simply one of several possibilities for man's pious self-expression. It stands alone as God's message to man. It is not just a word from God or a word about God; it is the Word of God whose content is Jesus Christ. The Church is catholic because it does not come with a philosophy nor a system of doctrine nor an ethic; it does not even come with a religion. It comes with a person, a living God, who speaks through Jesus Christ. Our God is larger than the founder of religion. Our Gospel transcends religion as well as time and place. And our Church, so long as it is faithful to this witness, is the catholic Church."

To correct such a paragraph in the sense of Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions is simply impossible, for in it truth and error are hopelessly commingled. The whole article so teems with unbiblical and un-Lutheran declarations that it must be rejected in its entirety. One thing is certain: If we give up the Scriptural distinction of the *ecclesia visibilis* and *invisibilis* and of orthodox visible churches and heterodox visible churches, which we must avoid, then the entire doctrine of the Church becomes uncertain and confused. Then, too, there will be nothing to oppose to the prevailing unionism of today, and rationalism will reign and destroy without hindrance. What we need today is a new, careful study of the Scriptural doctrine of the Church as it is set forth in the Confessions of our Lutheran Church. *Qui bene distinguit, bene docet.* But to distinguish well and to teach well requires first of all that we study well, *viz.,* Holy Scripture and our precious Lutheran Confessions. J. T. M.

"A Working Faith for the World," by Dr. Hugh Vernon White, professes to speak from the standpoint of "liberal Christianity," which in some fashion is set in contrast with "the dogmatic metaphysics of the Catholic Church," the "irresponsible other-worldliness of Lutheranism," and the "legalistic conception of Calvinism." When the author declares, bluntly and dogmatically, that "Lutheran Christianity has no working faith and philosophy for this present world," one wonders amazedly whether the author has ever seen the great "guide book for the Christian life," Luther's Small Catechism, which perhaps has had a greater ethical influence in the "present world" than any other single book, excepting the Bible itself. And one wonders why certain countries where the Lutheran Church is practically the only Church are pointed to by the whole world as the best in social and economic and political conditions if "Lutheran Christianity has no working faith and philosophy for the present world. . . ." *The Lutheran,* Jan. 11, 1939

The Madras Conference. — Repeatedly it has been mentioned that the International Missionary Council was gathered in Madras, India, in December of last year. About five hundred persons attended. A matter that struck an observer as noteworthy was the fellowship practised by delegates from China and Japan although their countries are at war with each other. Bishop Hobson, who gives his impressions of the meeting in an article written for the *Living Church* and to whom we owe the little detail just mentioned, furthermore dwells on the various theological tendencies represented in the assembly, for instance, that of exponents of "the continental point of view," holding the position of Karl Barth, and another that of a group holding the so-called "American position," where, if we understand the term, the emphasis is placed not so much on theology as on social work. The Confessional Church of Germany was represented, and its spokesmen were treated with much sympathy. With respect to definite results of the meeting the Bishop says: "First, Madras proclaims the Christian truth that the State has no supreme or ultimate authority over the individual. . . . Second, Madras affirms the Christian truth that as no individual has a right to claim supreme sovereignty in his relations with others, so no state has a right to claim supreme sovereignty in its relations with other states." If this second point is reported correctly, it is very apparent that the council busied itself with matters over which the Church has no jurisdiction or authority. A.

Recent Changes in the Presbyterian Church. — The Machen group, first known as the Presbyterian Consitutional Covenant in 1936, then as the Presbyterian Church of America, has again changed its name. Members of the Presbyterian Church of the U. S. A. (Northern Presbyterians) had brought suit to restrain the Machen group from using a name so similar to theirs. Rather than to continue the litigation the small group adopted the name Orthodox Presbyterian Church at the fifth General Assembly, held in February. According to the *Presbyterian Guardian* the name Orthodox was selected as a testimonial to the fact that they intend to remain faithful to historic Calvinism, especially the so-called Five Points of Calvinism. The theory of limited atonement is a fundamental

tenet of the Orthodox Presbyterians, whereas the Presbyterian Church in its Declaratory Statement of 1903 had virtually repudiated this theory. The *Presbyterian Guardian,* official paper of the Orthodox group, in the current volume, p. 31, objects to the Dr. W. A. Maier's statement in *The Cross from Coast to Coast* "The Savior lays down His life as the acceptable and eternal ransom of *your* souls." The reviewer states that by thus addressing believers and unbelievers Dr. Maier has fallen into the dilemma of all who teach universal atonement. If they were ransomed, they would be saved. To tell an unsaved that the Savior's blood was shed in vain for him is tantamount to saying that "Christ died intending to save, but His purposes were frustrated." Calvinism with its theory of the sovereignty of God and doctrine of irresistible grace cannot understand and accept 2 Pet. 2:1. — The Orthodox Presbyterian Church maintains Westminster Seminary at Philadelphia, which has prepared 172 graduates for the ministry since 1931.

Some Presbyterians who had withdrawn from their respective modernistic churches and had associated themselves with the Orthodox Church broke with the Machen group because of their views on premillennialism and total abstinence. This group of Presbyterians and other adherents of Fundamentalism have recently organized the Bible Presbyterian Church. Dr. H. Mcallister Griffiths, reporting on this new denomination in the *Christian Beacon* (quoted in the *Sunday-School Times,* March 18, 1939), states that "for the first time in history a Presbyterian Church holding faithfully to the great doctrinal tradition of Augustine and Calvin has officially recognized and incorporated into its standards the fruits of the eschatological study of the last three hundred years." Faith Seminary at Wilmington, Del., with an enrolment of twenty theological students, is the headquarters of this new organization. We have been informed that the title "Faith" was selected to indicate that the seminary does not depend on endowments or other regular sources of income but is financed "as the Lord provides the funds." F. E. M.

A Crusade for Clean Literature. — Beginning on Ash Wednesday and lasting during the entire season of Lent, there was held in Canada under the auspices of the Catholic Youth Union a national crusade for good reading, according to *America,* a Catholic review of the week. This plan of action was decided upon in a recent convention at Ottawa, where the delegates representing about 400,000 young Canadians promised upon their honor: 1. to buy, read, and circulate only good, clean, and wholesome literature; 2. to refrain from buying, reading, and circulating any publications containing articles, illustrations or advertisements of an immoral, indecent, or suggestive nature. 3. to boycott all publications, distributors, and venders who pander to the public by sale and display of vicious matter. The project also embraces the formation of canvassing committees, one of whose functions is to visit news agencies, bookstores, and news-stands and request cooperation with the crusade, even asking the proprietors and venders to sign pledge cards. By means of lectures, speeches, news releases, radio announcements, the organization hopes to spread its "spirit throughout the Dominion. We insist that all forms of poison be labeled by the skull and cross-bones as a constant warning to

those who must handle it. Our government has enacted severe regulations concerning the sale and use of narcotics and other harmful drugs, but vicious literature and obscene pictures, a poison more deadly to the spiritual and moral life of our young people, is sold openly over many of the counters in the places of business which we support by our patronage, or are peddled unlabeled among the children and young people of our Church and country, or are loaned to them from innocent- and at times even exclusive-looking private loan libraries. Our Christians ought to find out whether their community is cursed with distributing agencies of this form of moral poison. We would not remain indifferent if we were to discover that some fiend was deliberately polluting the water supply of our city with deadly cholera germs." A. M. R.

Has the preaching that voids the stern truths about sin and salvation brought peace and comfort to the Church, the nation, or the world? Under the caption "A Notorious Failure" *The Brethren Evangelist* forcibly sums up the situation:

"Modern religious movements for a generation have centered their efforts toward bringing world peace, tolerance between the races, and a new social order. Not only have these efforts ended in failure, but all these ideals are further from realization than when churchmen stopped the preaching of salvation and shifted to the social emphasis. Modernism can be credited with nothing but failure. It has not brought world peace; it has not brought tolerance between the races, and it has failed miserably in ushering in a new social order. There is a reason. Modernism is a departure from the purposes and commission given by our Lord to His Church. The Church is not told to transform men from the outside in but to present the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation and to outward transformations as well. The social gospel can find no short cut in a new social order. Salvation is an individual matter, and the more born again believers there are in the world, the better will be society. *The Presbyterian*

Where "America" Is Right. — No comment is needed on this item of *America* (Roman Catholic weekly) having the title "Mothers on the Jury."

"Some weeks ago, Mrs. Bessie Zahnstecher began to serve on a New York jury. After a few days she was rebuked by the judge, and her name was ordered stricken from the jury lists. She had reported late every morning. 'If you want to do jury duty,' said the judge, 'you should do it as the men do it.'

"The worth of that advice may be dubious, but it seems to us that Mrs. Zahnstecher had a good excuse. She had to prepare breakfast for her husband. Her little boy was suffering from a bad cold, and a new servant had to be instructed how to care for him. In addition, this domestic task and that called her before she could set out to serve her country on the jury.

"Sympathy is due Mrs. Zahnstecher, who deposes: 'I just feel terrible about all this.' But we should like to inquire into the mentality of the official who allowed a mother with a sick child to serve on a jury. Jury service is a duty, but there are higher duties, with which it should not

be permitted to interfere. A mother who cares for a sick child not only fulfils one of these, but helps the State more than by serving on a jury. It also seems to us that feeding a husband ranks above jury service. When homes are neglected, the State as well as the household suffers."

The Church Situation in Germany. — "According to latest news advices from Germany it is evident that further restrictions are being placed on the Church by those who are in authority. While the new decrees may be variously interpreted, it would seem that the process of bringing German Protestantism under the control of the Nazi state is gradually going forward.

"One of the new orders which have been published by Dr. Friedrich Werner, president of the Evangelical Church Council, provides that any church-member may choose some pastor other than the regular minister of his parish for the performance of 'the individual duties of his office, for religious instruction, or even for his entire churchly ministration.'

"Another of the new decrees provides that a pastor may be removed from his church against his will if it seems desirable to redistrict parishes. A pastor also may be dismissed 'if he can no longer conduct his office within his congregation in an advantageous manner or if the preservation of order in his congregation so demands.'

"Confessional circles are reported to be greatly concerned about the new orders, believing them to be a direct attempt on the part of the Nazi State to eliminate pastors who have been recalcitrant. Struggle for control of the churches between the Confessionalists and the German Christians (advocates of State domination) has been going on ever since Hitler came to power. Because of his opposition to Nazi interference in the Church the Rev. Martin Niemoeller, militant leader of the Confessional Synod, has been in a concentration camp for more than a year.

"The Evangelical Church, which is the State Church of Prussia, is a combination of both Lutherans and Reformed. The question of who dominates it is not very clear. Although Hitler brought about the election of Ludwig Mueller as *Reichsbischof,* the early efforts of this man to rule the Church brought about such a wide-spread revolt on the part of the Confessionals that Hitler was constrained to restrict his powers. This he did by appointing a layman, Hans Kerrl, as minister of church affairs in the *Reich.* Kerrl, however, has delegated certain powers to Dr. Werner, president of the Evangelical Church Council, and is believed by some to be using him as an instrument to carry out his own ideas. Werner does not possess the confidence of the Confessional group and has been openly opposed by many of these."

The above is an editorial appearing in the *Lutheran Companion.* On account of the difficulty of obtaining information we hesitate to make any statement of our own concerning the present religious situation in Germany. A.

Is Christianity Being Crushed in Germany? — A negative reply to this question is found in the *Presbyterian,* which quotes an exchange to this effect: "Recent dispatches from Berlin through the Associated Press indicate that the efforts to eradicate religious teaching in the

schools are making little headway. Only about fifteen per cent. of the Protestant teachers are reported as having acceded so far to the demands for the elimination of classes in religion. The great majority of the teachers not only themselves favor the continuance of such teaching, but are receiving the support of most of the parents, who also are opposed to the discarding of religious education. Moreover, it is stated that some of the provincial governors are siding with these parents, though it apparently means that they are risking their positions in doing so. The large group of Christians who have opposed the efforts of the government to force the Church to conform to the religious viewpoint of National Socialism, notwithstanding the persecutions to which they have been subjected, continue to defy these and all other efforts to paganize Christianity." To what extent the efforts of the State are here correctly characterized we are unable to say. Recent events make the separation of Church and State loom as a real possibility. A.

Juvenile Delinquency in Germany. — "Juvenile and youth delinquency and crime in Germany show an increase of forty per cent. during the past three years according to a report issued by the Nofrontier News Service. The number of offenders from 14 to 18 years of age jumped from 6,751 in 1934 to 9,954 for 1936. Once previously, during the depression years of 1931 and 1932, Germany experienced a similar rise in juvenile delinquency. During that period nearly 10,000 young people appeared before the courts, but of that number approximately (about 30 per cent.) were driven to crime by hunger and poverty. According to the most recent statistics, however, only 934 youths (fewer than 10 per cent.) were similarly motivated." So reports the *News Bulletin of the National Lutheran Council.* Whether this report is correct or not, we cannot say. *A priori* every Christian will admit that depriving the young of instruction in the Word of God must result in lawlessness on their part. If the article from which we have quoted is correct in what it cites from its authority, "two or three afternoons and Sunday belong to the Hitler youth irrespective of the schools," one need not be surprised at these conditions. A.

Brief Items. — Concordia Teachers' College, River Forest, Ill., announces that it will again hold a summer session. The dates are June 26 to July 29. For Sunday-school teachers an institute will be conducted from July 17 to 21. "The summer-school offers 1. a full summer course leading to the bachelor's degree, offered to teachers in a Christian environment; 2. a modified program for women teachers, many of whom have had no opportunity for college training in a synodical institution; 3. summer courses for choirmasters leading to membership in the Lutheran Choirmasters Guild; 4. courses for Sunday-school teachers in the new *Concordia Teacher-training Series;* 5. a special course for pastors, in which they prepare themselves for teaching the Sunday-school courses." An attractive folder, giving full information, is available. All that are interested should address the dean of the summer-school, Prof. W. O. Kraeft, Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill.

Greece is having its troubles with people who cling to the old

(Julian) calendar. Imprisonment of two bishops who advocate adherence to this calendar was of no avail. These men have been set free, and they have been ordaining helpers, sending them as priests to any village that is willing to have them. A certain number of monks, especially from Mount Athos, have been abetting this strange cause. It seems the Greek Church is afflicted with a real schism.

Speaking of decided changes in his religious convictions, Prof. E. G. Homrighausen of Princeton says in the *Christian Century:* "It was not Karl Barth alone who made this transformation. Mention must be made especially of Emil Brunner, Karl Heim, and Herman Kutter, and Eduard Thurneysen. Other events, listed farther on, conspired to assist in the process of my spiritual rebirth. Yet I must confess, it was not these men and events merely, but all of them led me to the two men I now regard as the greatest Christians of all times — Paul and Luther. In short, what hit me was not a theology, nor a theologian, nor a group of theologians, but realistic Biblical religion!"

Recently in Havana, Cuba, an Episcopal bishop was consecrated, the Rev. A. Hugo Blankingship. "He is the first Anglican bishop ever to have been consecrated in Cuba and the third bishop of Cuba."

The bishop (Anglican) of the Windward Islands is reported to have uttered this complaint: "Today we are spending thousands of pounds on the education of children in the mission-field. In my islands there are at work 46 American crazy religions. — Holy Rollers, Holy Shakers, and all sorts of unholy holies. We are flooded with pernicious literature. Here is our Mother Church teaching her children to read and leaving it to the heretics to provide them with reading matter." The Windward Islands belong to the West Indies.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York will be practically completed this year. $435,000 has been collected for that purpose.

A reader of the *Presbyterian,* writing a letter to that journal, warns against union with the Episcopalians. He says very correctly: "We would suggest that, if Presbyterians, either clerical or lay members, wish to become Episcopalians, let them do so, and *vice versa;* but there is no necessity for taking the whole denomination along for the sake of a few who wish the change."

The *Christian Century* writes that Dr. A. D. Mattson, professor of Christian Ethics at Augustana Lutheran Seminary, is to have said in an address before a conference on the relation of the Church to contemporary social problems: "The New Testament provides more material for sociology than for theology. . . . Jesus performed many of His miracles for social service. The sins of which John the Baptist urged his listeners to repent had a very definite social character. The duty of the Church is to testify against all sin, individual and social. The Church must not identify itself with any political group, but must sit in judgment upon all political movements and theories from the standpoint and spirit of Jesus." What a sad aberration! The speaker ought to ponder 1 Cor. 5:12, 13, "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? . . . But they that are without God judgeth." A.

Book Review — Literatur

The Book of Beginnings. A New Translation of the Book of Genesis. By Alexander Marlowe. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 139 pages, 5×7½. Price, $1.00.

This is an interesting attempt, of value in particular to the theologian who is working with the original languages of the Bible. The author presents a translation of Genesis from the standpoint of the Hebrew scholar, and to such the book will prove a challenge, for there are many interesting phrases in the new translation. But one could hardly recommend the rendering to the average layman, for the author has some rather strange translations. Instead of "God, the Lord" we have here "Jehovah the Elohim." Instead of "woman" we have "she-man." Instead of the serpent we have "Nahash, the hissing Stinger." Instead of "Egypt" we have "Mizraim." But for the man who has kept up his Hebrew there are many enlightening sections. P. E. KRETZMANN

John Wyclif and the English Bible. By Melvin Mayce Cammack. American Tract Society, 7 W. 45th St., New York. 289 pages. Price, $1.75, postpaid. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Mr. M. M. Cammack has diligently collected just about all the available data concerning John Wyclif's life. This material is offered in the first and second chapters of the book. In the third chapter he takes up the discussion of the study of the English language in Wyclif's day. He points out that at that time there was no such thing as an English grammar or an English dictionary. Every one who spoke the language of England chose his own spelling, his own vocabulary, and his own grammatical construction. Scholars still used Latin. Some used a queer mixture of Anglo-Saxon, French, and Latin. This makes a very interesting and informative chapter. After devoting several more chapters to an investigation of Wyclif's part in certain translations, his struggle against opposition, and his relation to others, the author then, in the second part of his book, reprints Wyclif's translation of certain parts of the Bible. Those who wish to have authoritative material concerning early translations of the English Bible must consult this volume.

We were surprised to find the old error that Luther taught consubstantiation repeated in this volume. The author admits that he does not understand Wyclif's doctrine concerning the Eucharist. He comes to the conclusion that it was very much like Luther's doctrine. He gives credit to Luther for influencing the English people, especially many of the clergy, to return again to the teachings of Wyclif and his Lollards. He also admits that Wyclif's translation is decidedly inferior to that of Luther because the English Reformer translated the Vulgate, whereas Luther translated the original languages of Holy Scriptures.

To those who are interested in the development of English from a mere Low-German dialect into a very dignified literary language this book offers real treasures. Just to give the reader a taste of Wyclif's

language, let me say that he uses "delve" for dig; "farmer" for steward; "woot" for know; "skippies" for measures; "trowe" for believe; "stoole" for robe; "meslelis" for lepers; "rewme" (realm) for kingdom; "dome" for judgment, etc. A very helpful and valuable part of the book is the annotated bibliography which is added. This contains not only references to primary and secondary sources, but supplies a description of each work, book, or publication, so that the reader may choose those which especially interest him and furnish what he needs.

M. S. SOMMER

Faith of Our Fathers. A Review of Our Holy Christian Faith as Set Forth in the Apostles' Creed. By J. Theodore Mueller, Th. D., Professor of Doctrinal and Exegetical Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 124 pages, 5½×8. Price, $1.00. Order from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Here is a good book, which both stimulates interest in doctrinal study and brings wholesome, Scriptural instruction to its readers. Discussing the various statements of the Apostles' Creed, which is made the basis of the work, our esteemed colleague dwells on, and expounds, the fundamental teachings of the Christian Church. The student will find every important doctrine of the Bible treated. While the Apostles' Creed, for instance, does not make mention of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, this book in the chapter on the Holy Spirit submits paragraphs setting forth what the Bible says on the Sacraments. The Apostles' Creed, to give another instance, does not make mention of the inspiration of the Bible, but in the opening chapters of this book a brief statement of Scripture's teaching on this important matter is included. The presentation is simple and of kindling warmth; the print is good. In addition to acquainting strangers with our doctrinal position the book can well be used for review purposes by Sunday-school teachers, Bible classes, and adults in general.

W. ARNDT

Das Buch des Kampfes. Von Helmut Frey. Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart. 191 Seiten 5½×8¾. Preis: RM. 3.80.

Das Buch der Führung. Von Helmut Frey. Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart. 232 Seiten 5½×8¾. Preis: RM. 4.80.

Es sind dies zwei Bücher einer Serie, „Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments, Erläuterungen alttestamentlicher Schriften", in der sie als Band 3 und 4 erscheinen. Mag. theol. Frey, seit 1930 **Pastor diaconus** an der St. Johannisgemeinde zu Dorpat, seit 1931 Dozent am dortigen Theologisch-philosophischen Luther-Institut, sagt über Art und Weise seiner Darstellung, daß sie sei eine „Auslegung, die aus den biblischen Berichten über Ereignisse, die sich vor Jahrtausenden abspielten, die immer wiederkehrenden Strukturgesetze des Lebens mit Gott ablieſt. . . . So ist es der gleiche Rhythmus des Kampfes, der das Leben Jakobs, den Weg des auserwählten Volks, die Kirchengeschichte, das Leben des einzelnen Christen von heute und schließlich in reinster Form das Leben des HErrn selber durchzittert, wenn auch auf der andern Seite der Kampf seines Lebens grundsätzlich verschieden ist von dem unsrigen". (Band 3, S. 10.) Man vergleiche Schriftstellen wie Röm. 14, 4; 1 Kor. 10, 11; 2 Tim. 3, 16. 17. In dem Nachweis der Wahrheit dieser Schriftworte, in der Anwendung der alttestamentlichen Geschichten auf unser eigenes

Christenleben, in der klaren Disposition der einzelnen Kapitel und Abschnitte liegt meines Erachtens die Hauptstärke und der Wert dieser Bücher für einen Pastor, der sich ja amtshalber und zur eigenen Erbauung immer wieder mit dem Alten Testament beschäftigen muß. Als Beispiel der Darstellungsweise möge genügen die Inhaltsangabe von Kap. 2, Buch 4 (S. 5), und dessen „Zusammenfassung" (S. 46). Seite 5 lesen wir: „Kap. 2. Schuld und Schmach innerhalb des auserwählten Stammes (1 Mos. 38, 1—30). Die Sünde der Auserwählten im Dienst der Führung Gottes. — Das Urbild der Gnade Christi, die unser Fleisch und Blut annimmt. — Judas Fall. a. Die Verwischung der Grenzen zwischen den Auserwählten und der Welt (38, 1—5). b. Das Gericht über die Sünde und den Widerstand der Auserwählten (38, 6—11). c. Der Sieg der Wahl Gottes in der Sünde der Auserwählten (38, 12—26). d. Der Widerspruch zwischen menschlicher Wahl und Gottes Wahl (38, 27—30)." Das wird ausgeführt Seite 40—46. Seite 43 lesen wir: „Ist aber ein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen Juda mit seiner doppelten Moral, der die Frau verbrennt für das, was der Mann sich selbstverständlich herausnimmt, und dem Mann der sogenannten christlichen Gesellschaft von heute? In Juda wird uns gezeigt, was wir sind, wenn Gottes Gnade uns nicht hält." Seite 46 folgt dann die Zusammenfassung: „So verkündigt dies Kapitel eine zwiefache Botschaft. 1. Die erste hat Martin Luther uns gedolmetscht, wenn er sagt, daß dies Kapitel mit seiner Finsternis zu den köstlichsten und tröstlichsten der ganzen Bibel zählt. Es ist so köstlich, weil es allen falschen Schein zerstört, mit dem wir so gern unser schwaches Fleisch umkleiden, um — eingesponnen in diese falschen Illusionen — desto tiefer zu irren und zu fallen. Die Wahrheit aber über unser Fleisch — das bei den größten Heiligen das gleiche ist — lehrt uns, daß wir Gnade brauchen. . . . 2. Die zweite Botschaft [die uns übrigens auch Luther zeigt, St. L. I, 1171. 1195] lautet: „Wenn Gottes Sohn sich nicht gescheut hat, dieses Fleisch und Blut Judas anzunehmen und drin zu wohnen, so wird auch mein Fleisch und Blut ihm nicht zu schlecht sein, um mich anzunehmen, und es dürfen auch heute Letzte Erste werden. Gottes Kommen in dies verachtete Fleisch lehrt der Gnade vertrauen. Darum ist diese Botschaft so tröstlich."

Und doch ist unsere Freude an den Büchern keine ungemischte. Der Verfasser steht unter dem Einfluß der modernen Kritik und Barths. Er hält die „Quellenfrage" für „eine im wissenschaftlichen Schrifttum zu Genüge behandelte", Band 3, 10, und nimmt sie an, redet, soweit ich gelesen habe, nie von Moses als dem Verfasser, sondern von dem „biblischen Schriftsteller (früher Redaktor genannt)", 3, 10, der Thamar als Davids Stammutter und damit auch als Mutter des Messias kannte, 4, 42. Die Barthsche calvinistische Auffassung des Wortes Gottes findet sich 4, 76. 77: „Unsere Geschichte zeigt, ein Gotteswort kann eine umwälzende staatspolitische Bedeutung gewinnen. Joseph schöpft aus dem Gotteswort, mit dem Pharao nichts anfangen konnte, ein ganzes staats- und wirtschaftspolitisches Reformprogramm. Er fordert Sparmaßnahmen, die Einsetzung eines Lebensmitteldiktators, die Einsetzung eines ersten Siebenjahrplans, Verwaltungsreform, Notgesetze, Ausschreibung des Fünften, Einführung von Kornmonopolen und Lebensmittelmagazinen, Zentralisierung der Verwaltung — das alles von einem Worte Gottes her, das nicht einmal an ihn ergangen, nur ihm wiedergegeben worden war." Kurz vorher heißt es: „Wenn doch auch in unserer Zeit mehr Menschen wären, die das Wort Gottes für ihr ganzes Volk hören und die Schlußfolgerungen daraus zu ziehen, das Gebot der Stunde darin zu fassen imstande wären!" Dazu ist zu bemerken: Einmal gibt der Text auch nicht den

geringsten Anlaß, das Reformprogramm Josephs von einem Worte Gottes her abzuleiten. Die Auslegung des Traums, des Wortes Gottes an Pharao, hört mit V. 32 auf. V. 33—36 ist der Rat Josephs, des von Gott mit besonderer staatsmännischer Weisheit begabten Jünglings, den er aber keineswegs diesem Wort Gottes zu verdanken hatte, das ja von einem solchen Programm auch nicht mit einer Silbe redet. Zum andern, Gottes Wort, das heißt, die Heilige Schrift, stellt nirgends ein bestimmtes staats- und wirtschaftspolitisches Reformprogramm auf, an das Menschen, die sich dem Worte Gottes unterwerfen wollen, sich halten müßten. Zum dritten: Wenn man von einem noch heute an uns ergehenden Wort Gottes redet, das neben und außer der Heiligen Schrift ergeht und doch von gleichem Wert und gleicher Autorität sein soll wie die in allen ihren Worten von Gott eingegebene und darum unfehlbare Bibel, so ist das unbiblische, widerbiblische Schwärmerei, vor der man sich zu hüten hat. Wir halten es für unsere Pflicht, auf diese Fehler aufmerksam zu machen, die sich neben andern in diesen sonst so trefflichen Büchern finden, deren Lektüre einem Leser mit geübten Sinnen Genuß und Gewinn verschaffen wird. Th. Lätsch

No Other Way. By N. M. Ylvisaker. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 255 pages, 5¼×8. Price, $1.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Dr. N. M. Ylvisaker, a graduate of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and of Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., is at present executive secretary of the Young People's Luther League and vice-president of the Youth Commission of the American Lutheran Conference. As such he is deeply interested in the doctrinal training of the young people of his Church, and it is chiefly in their interest that he has written his books, *The Glory Road, Face Toward God,* and now *No Other Way, i. e.,* no other way of salvation than through faith in Christ Jesus. While the first two works are preeminently devotional and directional, the last is chiefly doctrinal, covering almost the entire field of Christian doctrine in close conformity to Luther's Catechism. It contains twenty-three chapters, which are divided into five chief parts, following Luther's well-known division. The book is written with deep earnestness and presents, largely by way of new approaches and in a new garb, the old Lutheran doctrines of sin and grace, justification and sanctification, centered in the cardinal doctrine of the *sola fide.* It is refreshing to note how the author emphasizes not only the doctrines of verbal and plenary inspiration and the inerrancy of Holy Writ, but also those of *sola Scriptura* and *sola gratia,* rejecting every human authority in theology and every form of synergism. While the chapter on "Awakening" is free from all pietistic and sectarian taint, we wonder whether it is not somewhat misleading to young people not sufficiently acquainted with our Lutheran doctrine. Occasionally the author quotes Barth and refers to Kierkegaard, though he proves himself a better theologian than either of them. But such quotations are exceptional. Again and again Luther and our Confessions are cited, together with Professor Hove and in many cases the dogmatical publications of our own Synod. We recommend this new popular and practical doctrinal theology to our pastors, not only in order that they

may discover what leading men in other synods are teaching, but also that they may rejoice at the deep interest in the study of Christian doctrine manifested by this doctrinal compend, and the pure presentation of our Lutheran doctrine in this new form. If Lutheran dogmaticians continue to publish works like Dr. Ylvisaker's *No Other Way*, there is yet hope that the Lutheran church union may be secured for which so many have worked and witnessed these many years.

J. Theodore Mueller

The Resurrection of the Human Body. By Norman H. Camp. The Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 127 pages, 5¼×7¼. Price, 75 cts.

This treatise on the resurrection both of Christ and of all the dead, on the reality and the nature of the resurrection, and on the importance of the doctrine, and on the fatal consequences of its denial is in the main Scriptural. Presented in simple language and with the assurance of faith, it is instructive and edifying. However, towards the end it gets into the millennium and presents the false teaching of premillennialism, or the double resurrection, the "first resurrection" proceeding in three stages (first the New Testament saints are raised, about seven years thereafter the Old Testament saints, and at the end of the seven years the tribulation saints, 144,000 Jews and the great multitude that has been saved through their preaching) and ushering in "the millennial reign of Christ on earth: Christ returns to Jerusalem in power and glory, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord; it will be a warless kingdom, in which the animals, too, will lose their ferocious natures." It is tragic. — The author presents the Scriptural teaching concerning the glorified, spiritual body of the resurrection. The use of the term "material body" in this connection is unfortunate. — The teaching that the wicked will be raised from the dead by virtue of Christ's resurrection, is an old Calvinistic idea.

Th. Engelder

The World's Religions. A Short History. By Charles Samuel Braden, Ph. D. Cokesbury Press, Nashville. 256 pages, 5×7½. Price, $1.50.

This is, as the subhead indicates, a short history of the religions of the world, written by a man who has done extensive work in the field of missions and in the history and literature of religions. We have here a great deal of information, in very readable form, for every one who wishes to consult some of the fundamental informational material in the field of comparative religion. The bibliography for further study is fairly comprehensive. The author discusses, in thirteen chapters, religion as such, the religions of primitive peoples, the religions of Egypt and Babylonia, the religions of Greece and Rome, the religions of Northern Europe, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the religions of China, the religions of Japan, Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. No special attempt is made to present Christianity as the absolute religion. In fact, the chapter on Christianity is by far the weakest in the whole book, since it contains many misrepresentations, as when the author states that the "early Jewish religion was quite certainly tribal" (p. 164), that Jesus "may have become a follower of John for a time" (p. 180),

and that the disciples on Pentecost Day spoke "in strange inarticulate sounds" (p. 185), whereas the text clearly states that the people heard the apostles speak every one in the tongue in which he was born. The author's discussion of the resurrection is extremely weak. If the reader will omit the chapters on Judaism and on Christianity, he may derive much value from a study of the book. P. E. KRETZMANN

Those Gay Middle Ages. By Frederick D. Kershner. Willett, Clark & Company, New York. 235 pages, 5¾×8. Price, $2.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

This is the way the other half lived in the Middle Ages, not the barons and princes, knights in steel and fair ladies, the priesthood and the hierarchy, — the life of the common people is in the foreground in these well-written chapters, each of them dealing with one large aspect of medieval life — sanitation, education, marriage, etc. The author is dean of the School of Religion at Butler University in Indianapolis. The theme of his book is: "We need all of the good things which the Middle Ages can present, but from the rest, good Lord, deliver us!" While Dr. Kershner appreciates the scholasticism of the Middle Ages as "one of the most remarkable triumphs of the spirit of man," he has no illusions regarding the inutility and ineffectiveness of the work done by the scholastics, here treated under the heading "The Hair-splitting Brigade." The book is written in a racy style, and it is, all in all, a stream-lined sketch of the Middle Ages that we have in these pages. Dr. Kershner has no reverence for the feudal nobility, glorified in verse and song; it was in fact "arrogant, callous and cruel, coarse and frequently contemptible." The inhuman cruelties practised, especially in the treatment of heretics, are pictured in a chapter headed "Where Was the Humane Society?" and the chapter describing the filth of the medieval cities bears the title "Pigs Is Pigs." These journalistic excrescences of Dr. Kershner's style are, however, a mere artifice used in order to make attractive a story which is highly unpleasant in most of its features and which, we should add, is here told on the basis of very sound scholarship. TH. GRAEBNER

Miniaturen aus meinem Leben. Von Hans Preuß. Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 1938. 140 Seiten 5¼×8. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 3.60.

Wiederholt haben wir an dieser Stelle Schriften von D. Hans Preuß, Professor der Kirchengeschichte an der Universität Erlangen, angezeigt und empfohlen, namentlich die große Luthertrilogie „Martin Luther der Künstler", „Martin Luther der Prophet", „Martin Luther der Deutsche" und seine jeden Leser fesselnde Kirchengeschichte „Von den Katakomben bis zu den Zeichen der Zeit", eins der interessantesten Werke, die wir in den letzten Jahren gelesen haben, und von dem ein Leser dieser Zeitschrift uns schrieb, daß wir ihn durch unsere Besprechung „verführt" hätten, das Buch sich anzuschaffen, daß er es aber wahrlich nicht bereue. Aus andern Schriften und Artikeln ist bekannt, daß D. Preuß zugleich ein hervorragender Kunsthistoriker ist, der Albrecht Dürer und Johann Sebastian Bach mit Recht als die Künstler der Reformation zu schildern weiß und den noch

lebenden Maler Rudolf Schäfer mit seinen feinen Illustrationen zu Luthers und Paul Gerhardts Liedern und in seiner Bilderbibel als den „lutherischsten aller Künstler" (S. 61) erkannt und gedeutet hat. In dem vorliegenden kleinen Werke, das wir in einem Zuge durchgelesen haben, erzählt nun Preuß aus seinem eigenen Leben und flicht dabei so mancherlei Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen ein. Immer schaut der lutherische Theolog und der feinsinnige Kunsthistoriker durch, und er hat diese mannigfaltigen Bilder mit Recht „Miniaturen" genannt. Es ist wirklich Kleinmalerei; denn Preuß ist in seiner Darstellungsweise selbst ein Künstler. Er erzählt da in interessanter und doch ganz einfacher Weise aus seinem Leben, aus seiner Kindheit, von seiner religiösen Entwicklung, aus seinen Schüler- und Studentenjahren und entwirft dabei namentlich ein anziehendes Bild von dem bekannten bedeutendsten neutestamentlichen Gelehrten der Neuzeit Theodor Zahn, seinem älteren Kollegen in Erlangen. Er erzählt von seinen Schulmeisterjahren, als er Gymnasiallehrer in Freiburg und Dresden war, von seinem Besuch bei den „Malerevangelisten" Wilhelm Steinhausen und Eduard von Gebhardt, schildert in lehrreicher Weise, wie es zur Verabfassung seiner Bücher gekommen ist; und doch tut er dies letztere in ganz unaufdringlicher, bescheidener Weise, ohne daß er sich selbst rühmen will; denn ihm schwebt dabei immer das von ihm zitierte bekannte Lutherwort vor: „Greif dir selber an deine Ohren, und greifst du recht, so wirst du finden ein schön Paar großer, langer, rauher Eselsohren. So wage vollend die Kost daran und schmücke sie mit güldenen Schellen, auf daß, wo du gehst, man dich hören könne, mit Fingern auf dich weisen und sagen: Sehet, sehet, da geht das feine Tier, das so köstliche Bücher schreiben kann!" (S. 93; in der St. Louiser Lutherausgabe 14, 437.) Er teilt seine Beobachtungen mit, wenn er an einem Kurort sich aufhält oder ein Konzert mit anhört, gibt eine feine Beschreibung von einem solchen, in dem Mozarts großes „Requiem" dargeboten wurde, und von einem andern mit zerfahrener moderner Musik. Und auch der Humor fehlt nicht, wenn er so manches aus seinem eigenen Leben, von seinen Kindern und Schülern erzählt oder von seinen Lehrern, und immer sind treffende, wertvolle Gedanken und Wahrheiten eingestreut, so daß wir, wenn es der Raum gestatten würde, manches ausführlicher mitteilen würden, z. B. daß er, noch nicht zwölf Jahre alt, die ganze Bibel durchgelesen hatte (die ganze Heilige Schrift ist ein Kunstwerk, aber „erst dem enthüllt sich die Bibel ganz, dem sie nicht mehr Literatur ist", S. 129) und daß ein Lehrer immer sich bewußt sein soll der Mahnung, die in dem Schriftwort Jes. 8, 18 liegt. Ganz besondere Achtung und große Liebe hat er für Luthers Persönlichkeit. Von seinem Rektorat an der Universität, dem höchsten akademischen Amt, sagt Preuß, daß es für ihn eine Schule der Demut war, besonders in den ersten Jahren der Not nach dem Weltkrieg. Und es fehlt auch nicht an ernsten Ausführungen über modernkirchliches und christliches Leben. Welchen Fleiß Preuß auf seine Studien verwandt hat, geht unter anderm daraus hervor, daß er für seine Luthertrilogie sämtliche Werke Luthers nach der großen Weimarer Ausgabe gelesen und mit der Feder ausgezogen hat, natürlich mit mancherlei großen Unterbrechungen. Es fehlt auch nicht an Selbstkritik, manchmal humorvoller, wenn er z. B. ganz offen gesteht, daß seine Handschrift in „späteren Jahren reichlich unleserlich" geworden sei, was sich auch uns bestätigt hat, so daß einer unserer hiesigen Freunde die Schriftzüge in einem hierher gerichteten Briefe als „chinesisch" bezeichnete. — In dem Gesagten liegt genug Empfehlung dieses anziehenden Buches.

L. Fürbringer

The Faith of Betty Stam. In Poem and Verse. By Elizabeth Alden Scott Stam. Arranged by her parents, Clara and Charles E. Scott. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 129 pages, 5½×7½. Price, $1.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

In 1934 John and Betty Stam, missionaries in China, were murdered by Chinese Communists, martyrdoms that stirred the entire Christian world at the time. The brief published story of their lives and early death was reviewed some time ago in our church-papers. The present volume is a collection of the poems of Betty Stam, collected by her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Charles E. Scott. They were written over a period of seventeen years. Some of them were found in the wreckage of the Stam home in Tsingtah, Ahnwei.

Betty Stam was a poet. Naturally, not all poems in such a collection will be of signal merit; but there are many both clever and beautiful among them, and a simple childlike faith in Christ runs through all the religious poems which we have had the time to read. Outstanding are such as these: "A Jingle of Words"; "Praise to Christ"; "Christmas." A fine quatrain (and there are a number of others) is entitled "Nevertheless" and reads:

Nevertheless Thy will is best;
Nevertheless Thou lovest all.
The bird Thou stirrest from her nest;
Thy wing prevents her fall.

W. G. Polack

BOOKS RECEIVED

From the Meador Publishing Company, Boston:

John Hanson and the Inseparable Union. An Authentic Biography of a Revolutionary Leader, Patriot, and Statesman. By Jacob A. Nelson. 146 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, $2.00.

From the Fundamental Truth Publishers, Findlay, O.:

101 Eye-Catching Objects. By Rev. Elmer L. Wilder, Th. D. 212 pages. Price, $1.50.

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